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**Schulz et al.**

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(54) **INTERNAL COMBUSTION ENGINE WITH  
SPLIT PILOT INJECTION**

(71) Applicant: **PRATT & WHITNEY CANADA  
CORP.**, Longueuil (CA)

(72) Inventors: **Edwin Schulz**, St-Bruno (CA); **Michael  
Lanktree**, La Prairie (CA); **Jean  
Thomassin**, Sainte-Julie (CA)

(73) Assignee: **PRATT & WHITNEY CANADA  
CORP.**, Longueuil, Quebec

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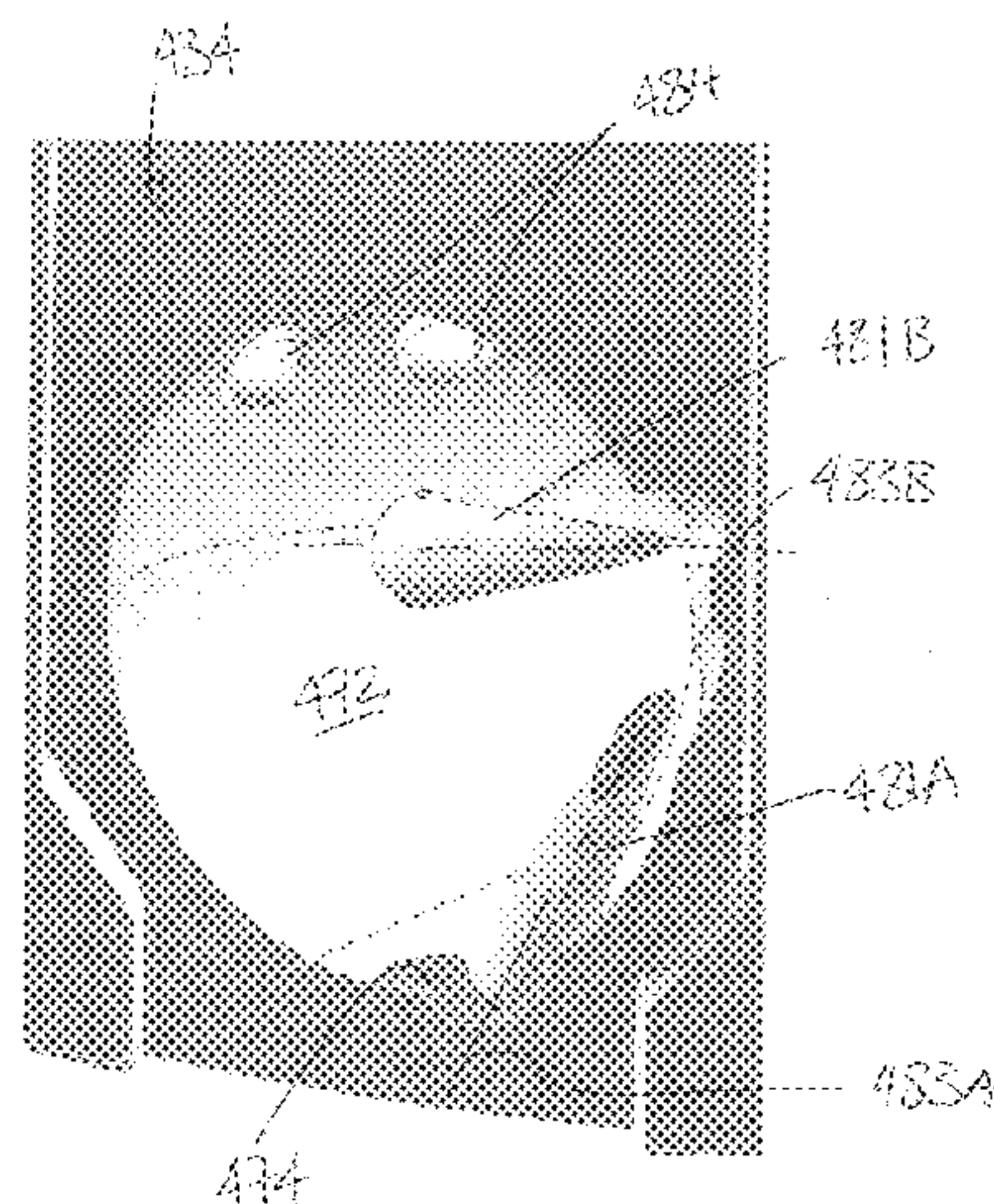
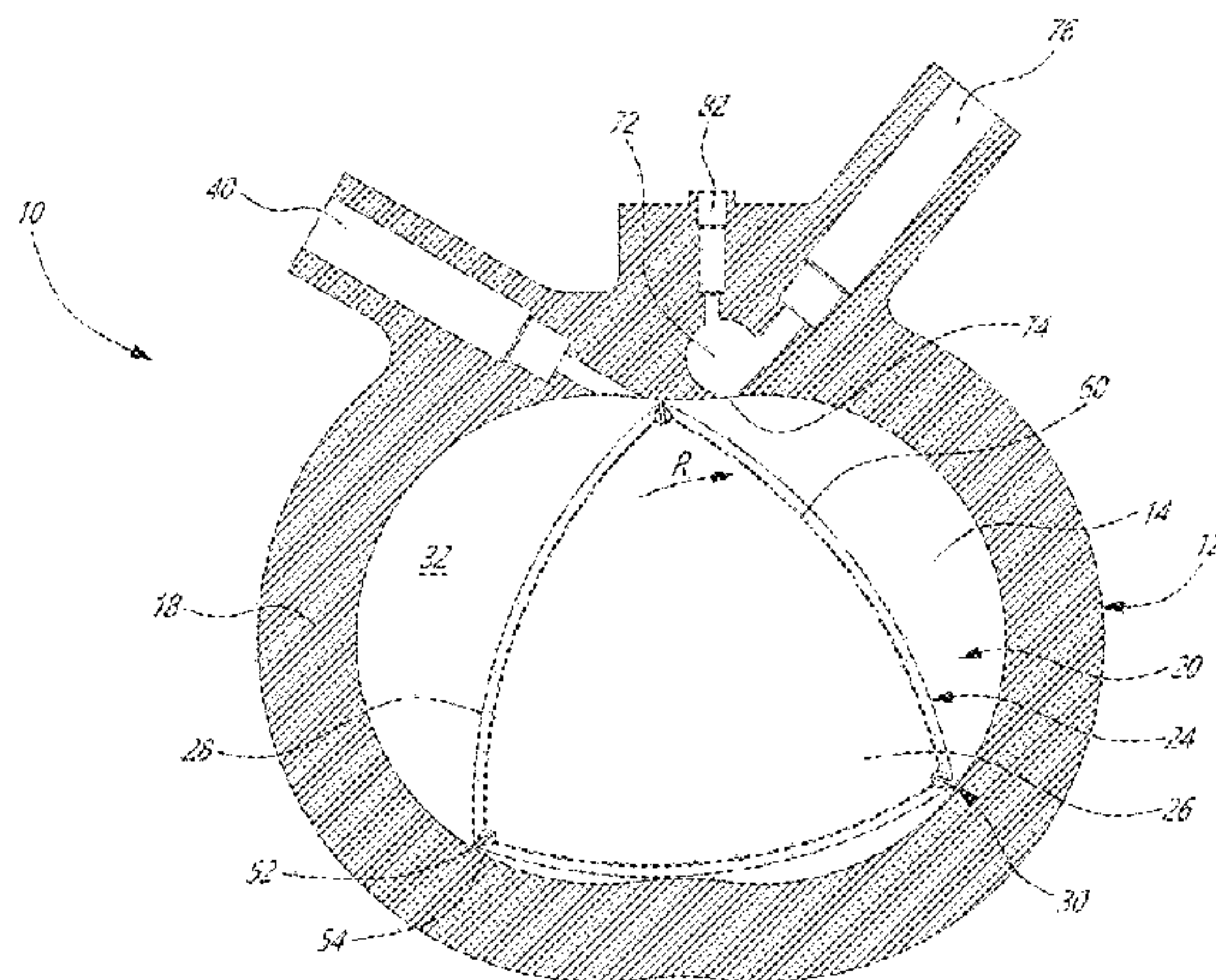
*Primary Examiner* — Jason Newton

(74) *Attorney, Agent, or Firm* — Norton Rose Fulbright  
Canada

(57) **ABSTRACT**

An internal combustion engine includes a housing defining  
an internal cavity, an inner body sealingly moving within the  
internal cavity for defining at least one combustion chamber  
of variable volume, a pilot subchamber in communication  
with the at least one working chamber, an ignition element  
in communication with the pilot subchamber, a main injector  
communicating with the at least one combustion chamber,  
and a pilot injector having a tip in communication with the  
pilot subchamber. The tip of the pilot injector includes at  
least a first injection hole defining a first spray direction and  
a second injection hole defining a second spray direction  
different from the first spray direction. The first spray  
direction extends toward the communication between the  
pilot subchamber and the at least one working chamber. A  
method of performing combustion in an internal combustion  
engine is also discussed.

**21 Claims, 13 Drawing Sheets**





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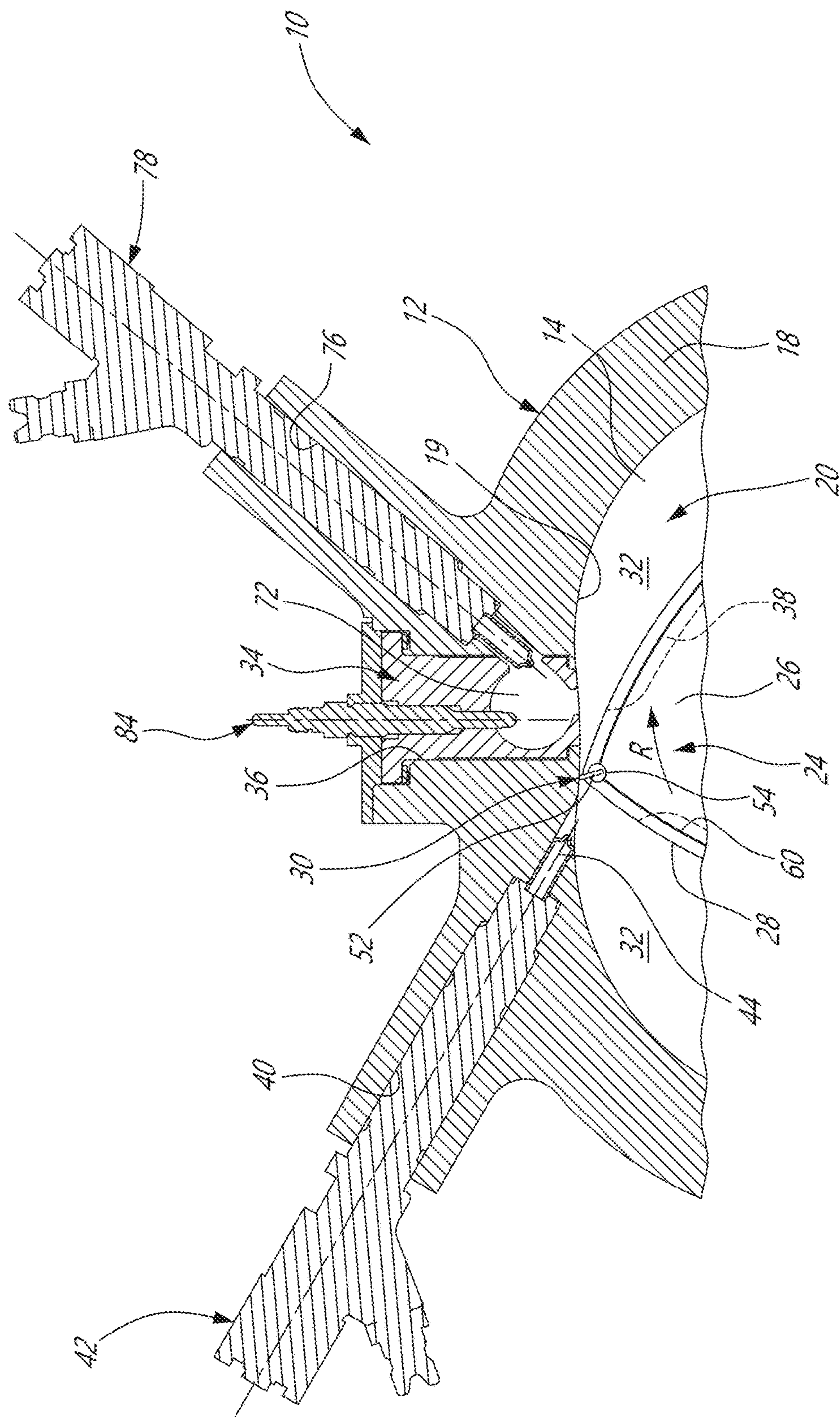
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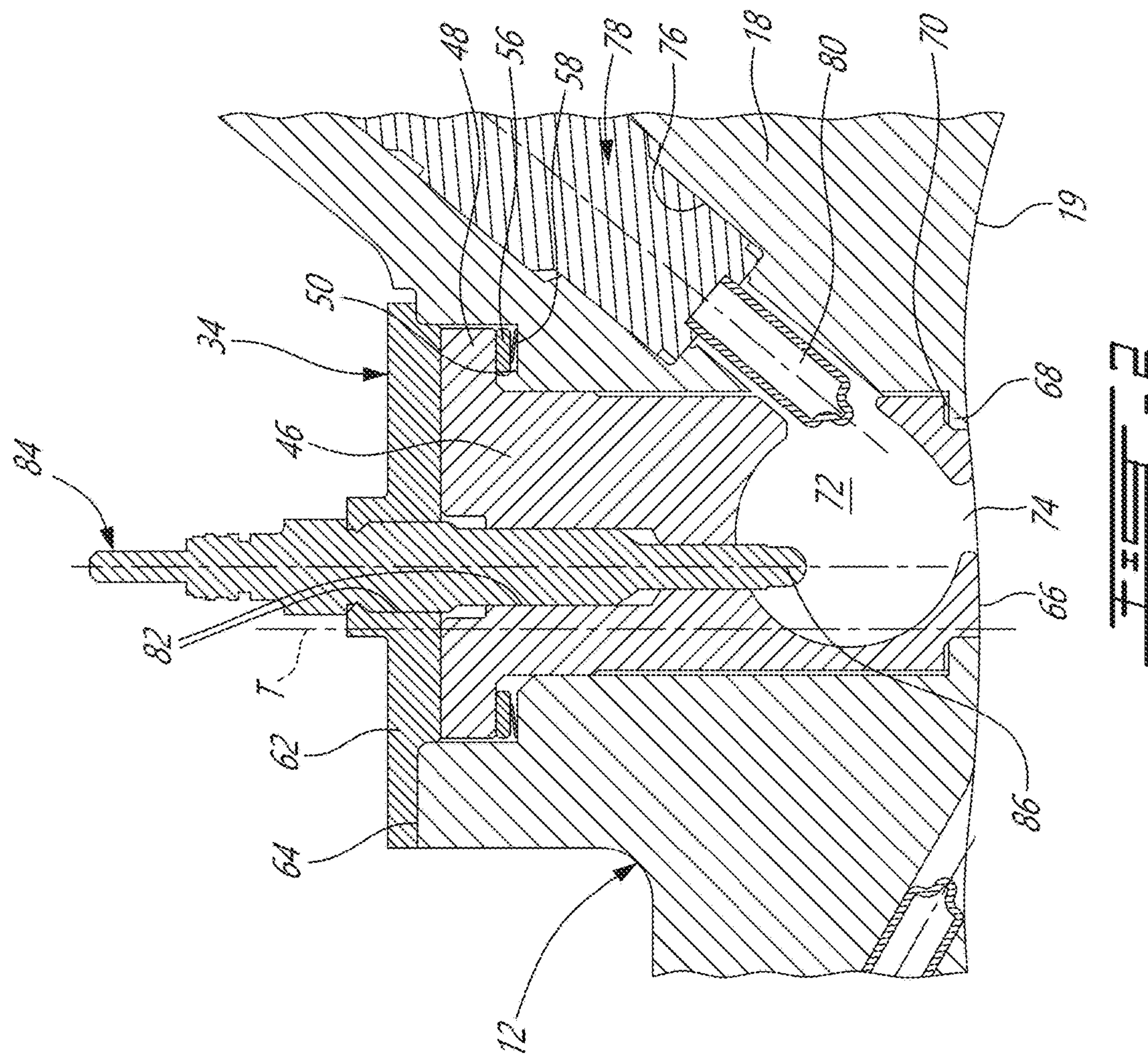
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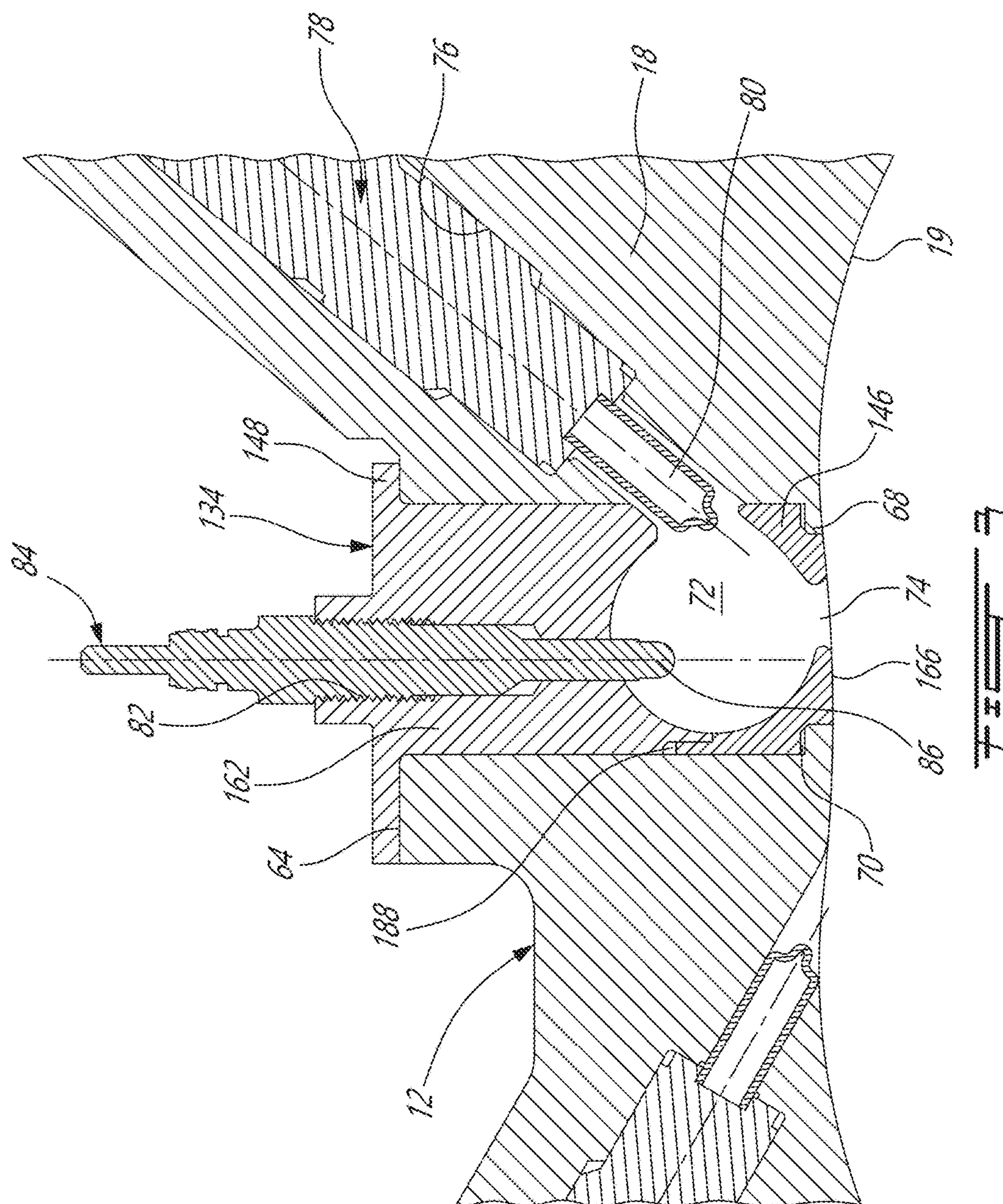
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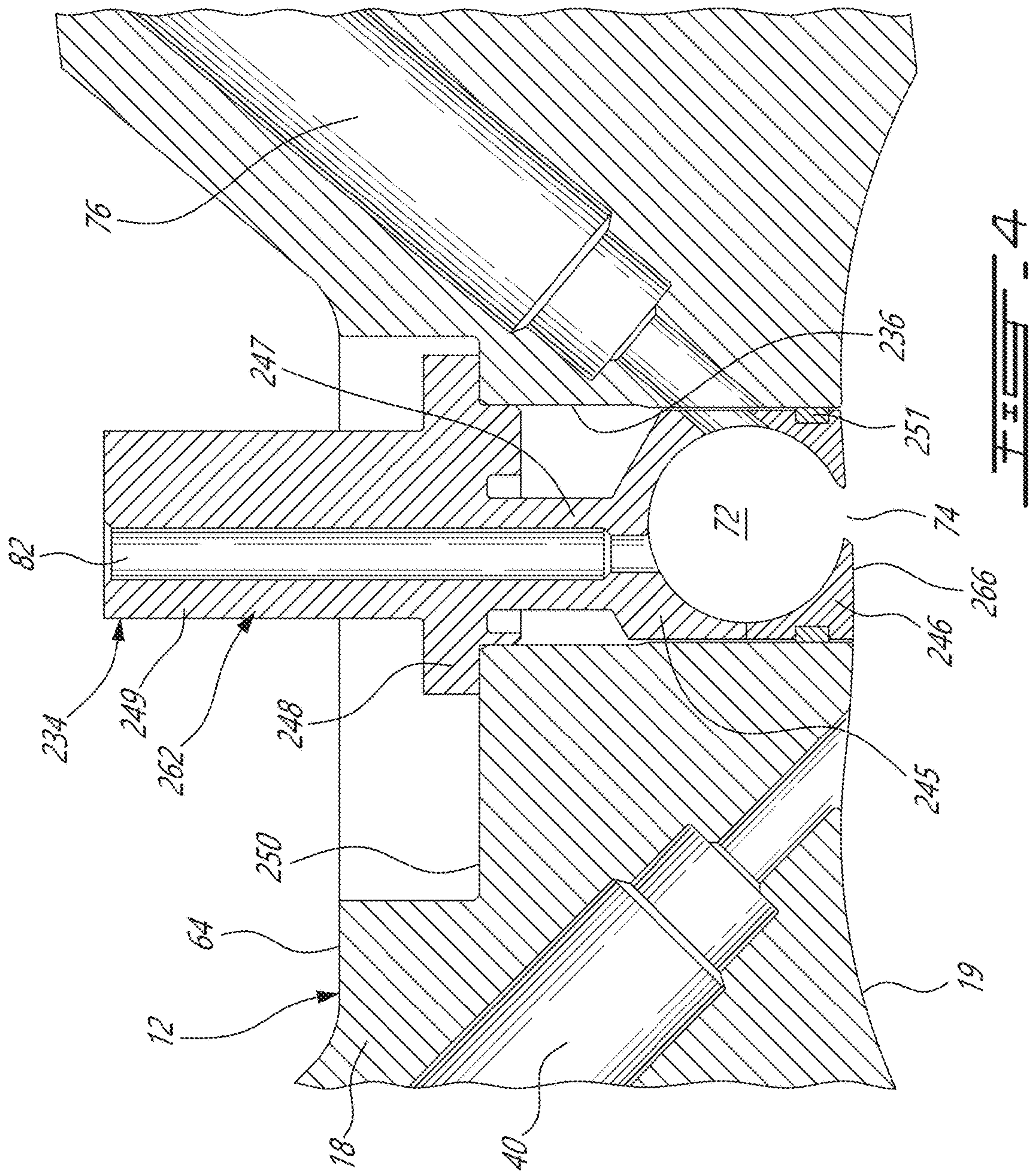




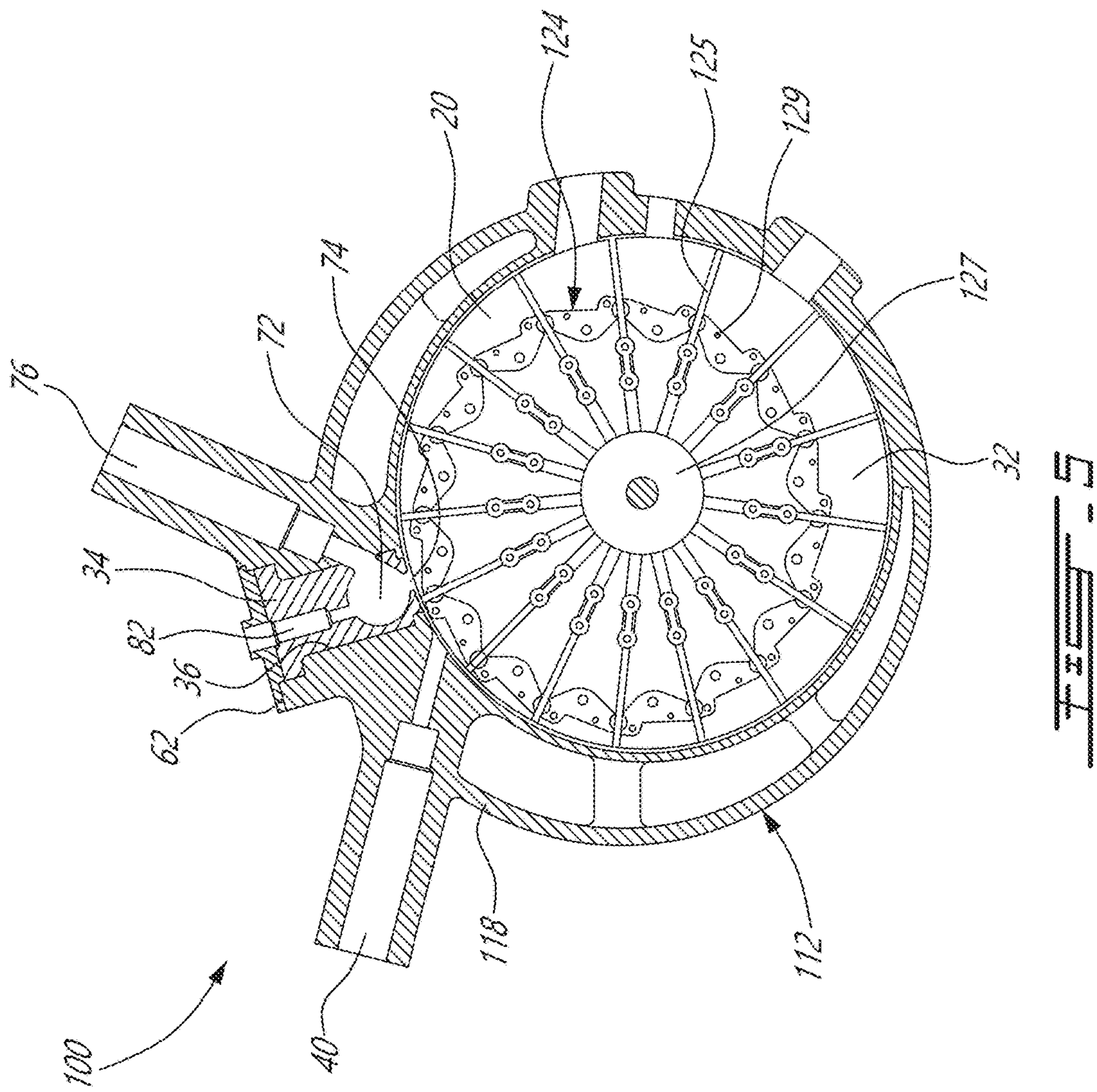














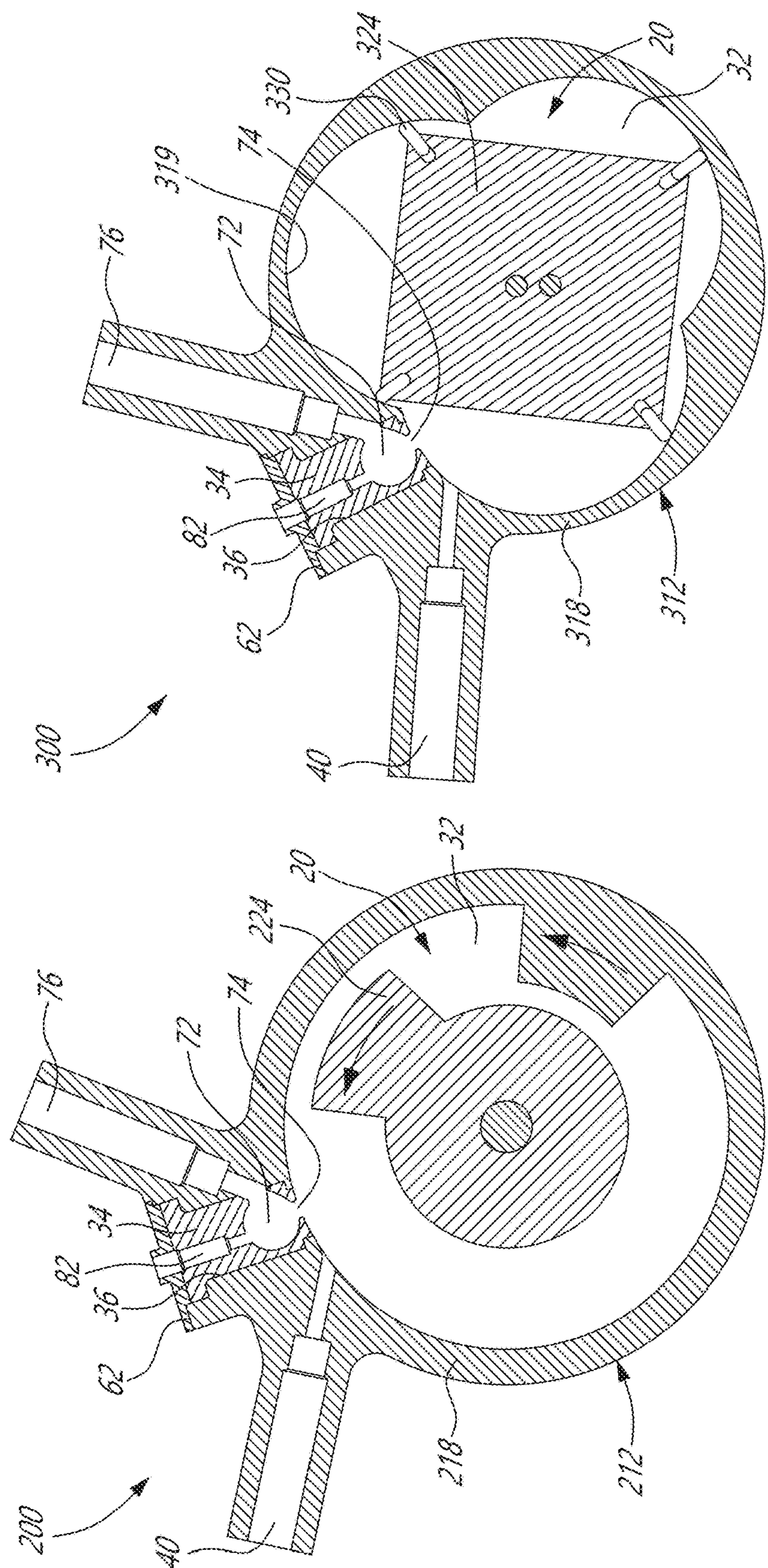
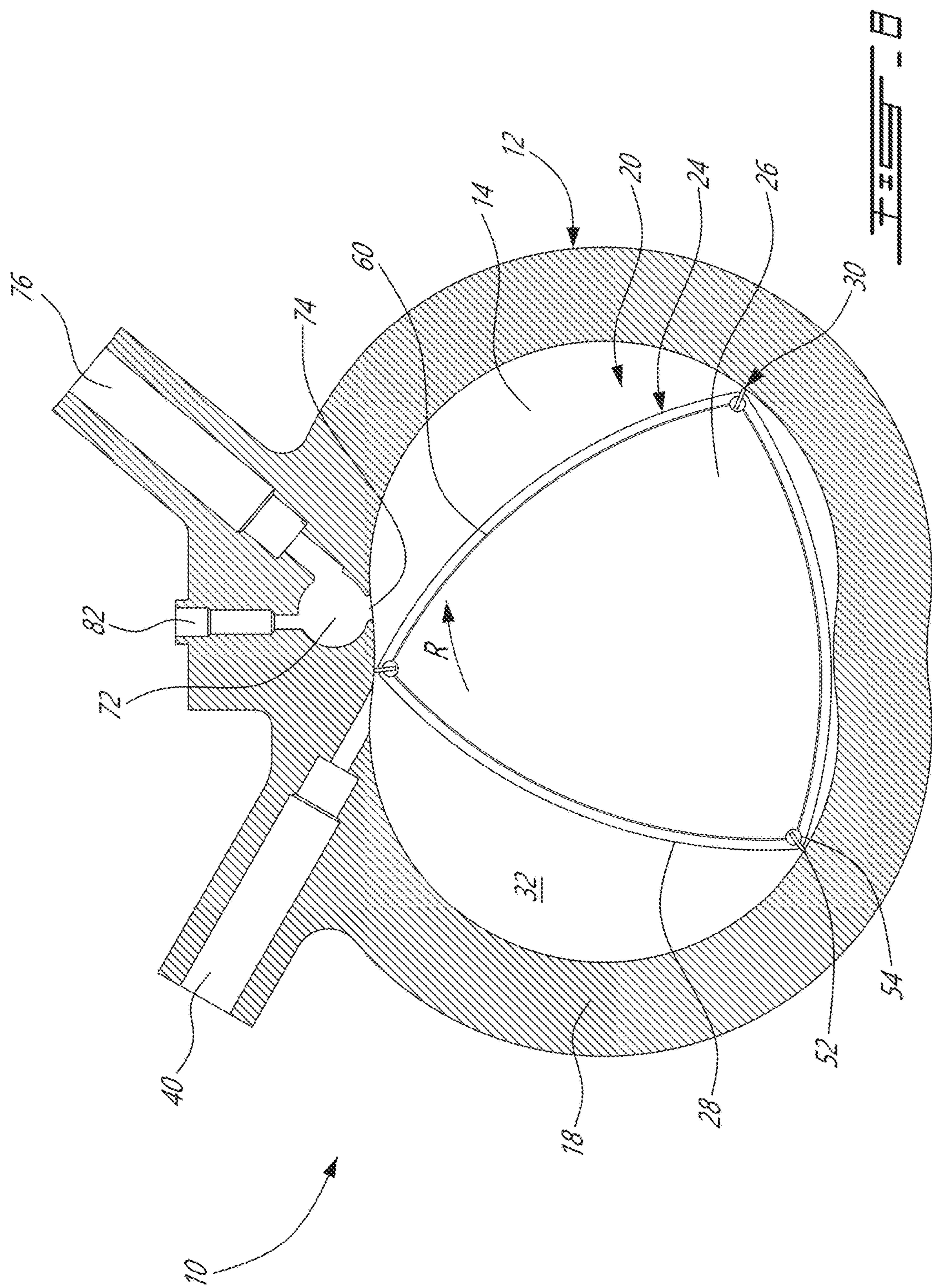
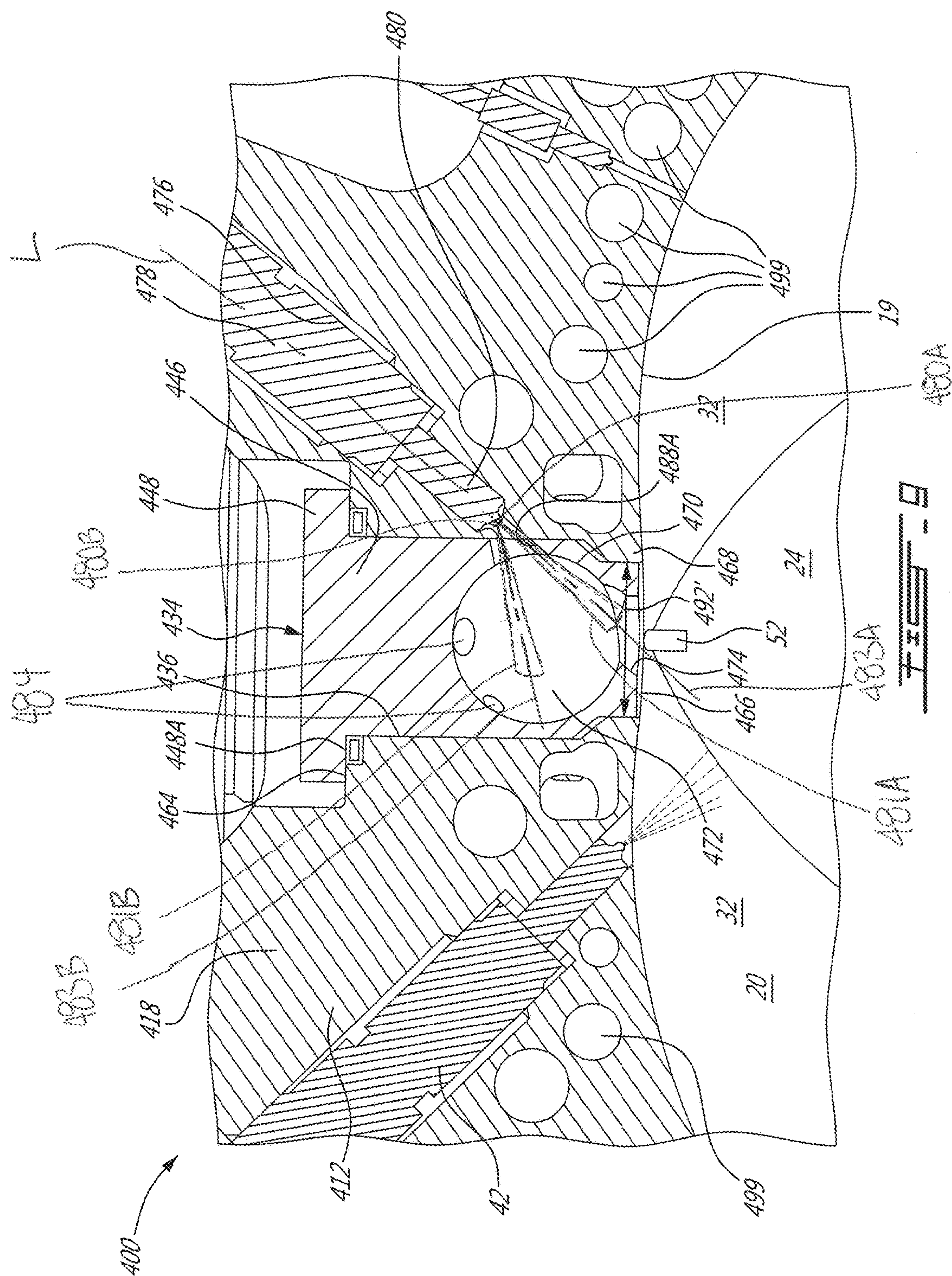


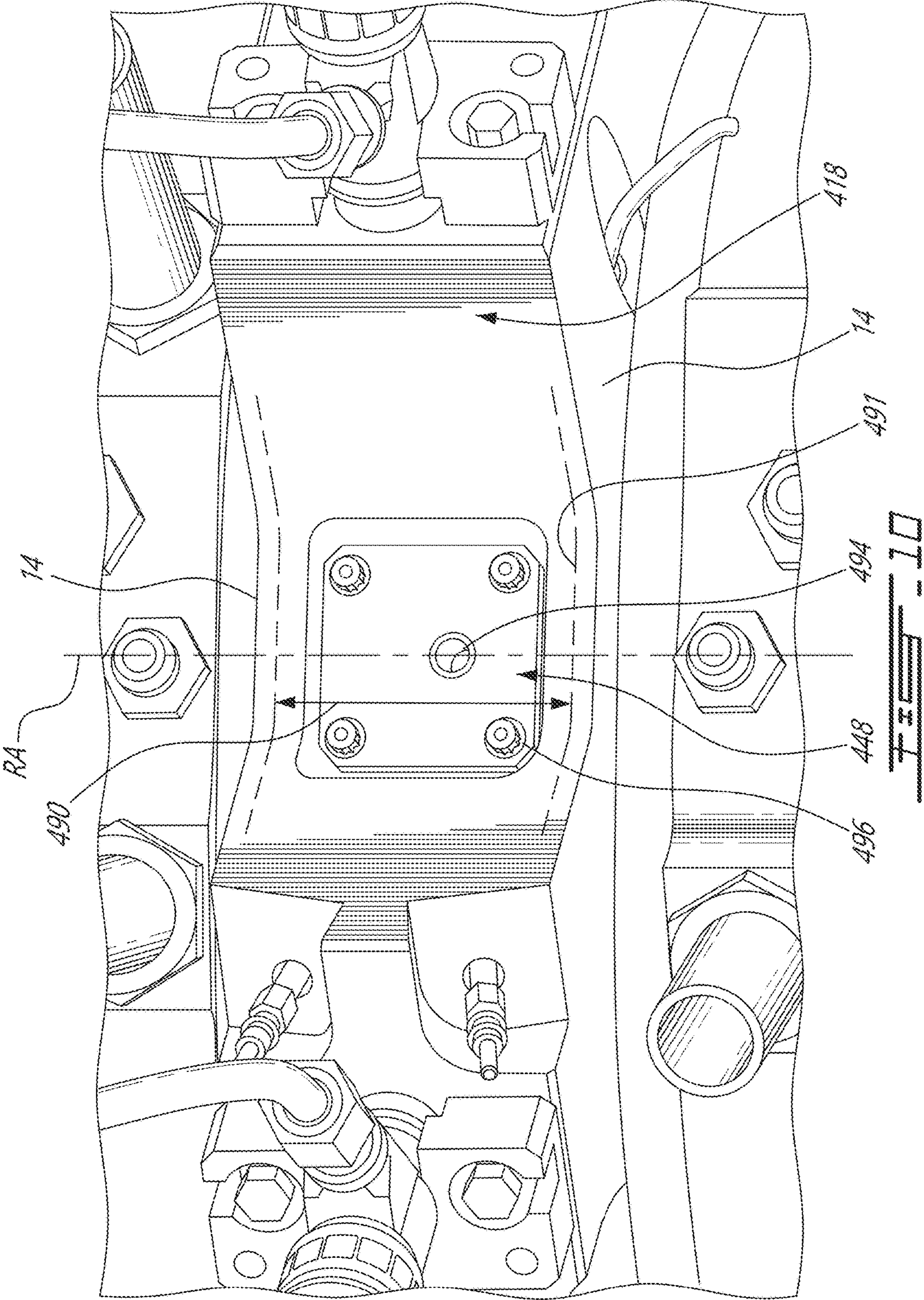
FIG. 7

FIG. 8

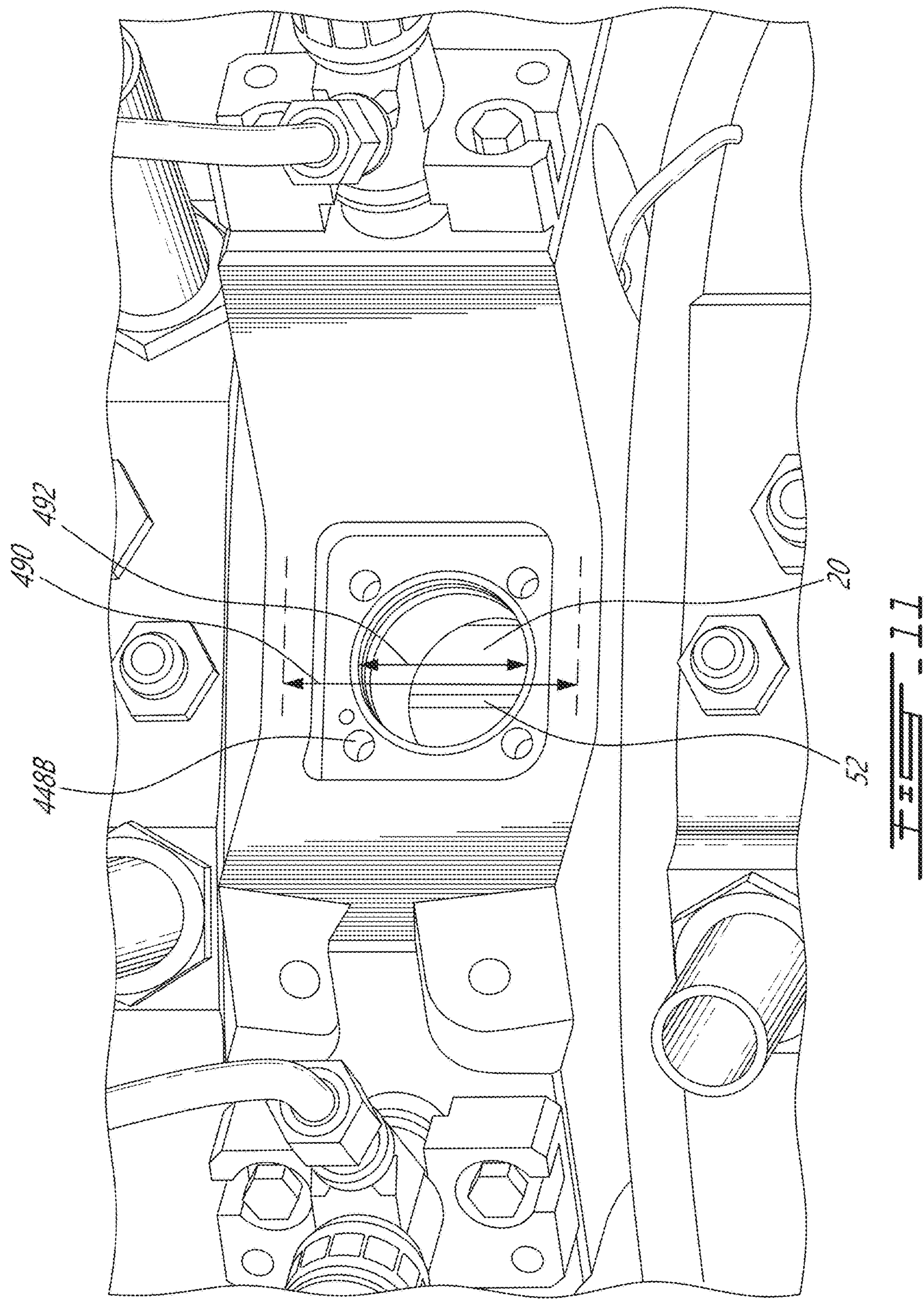












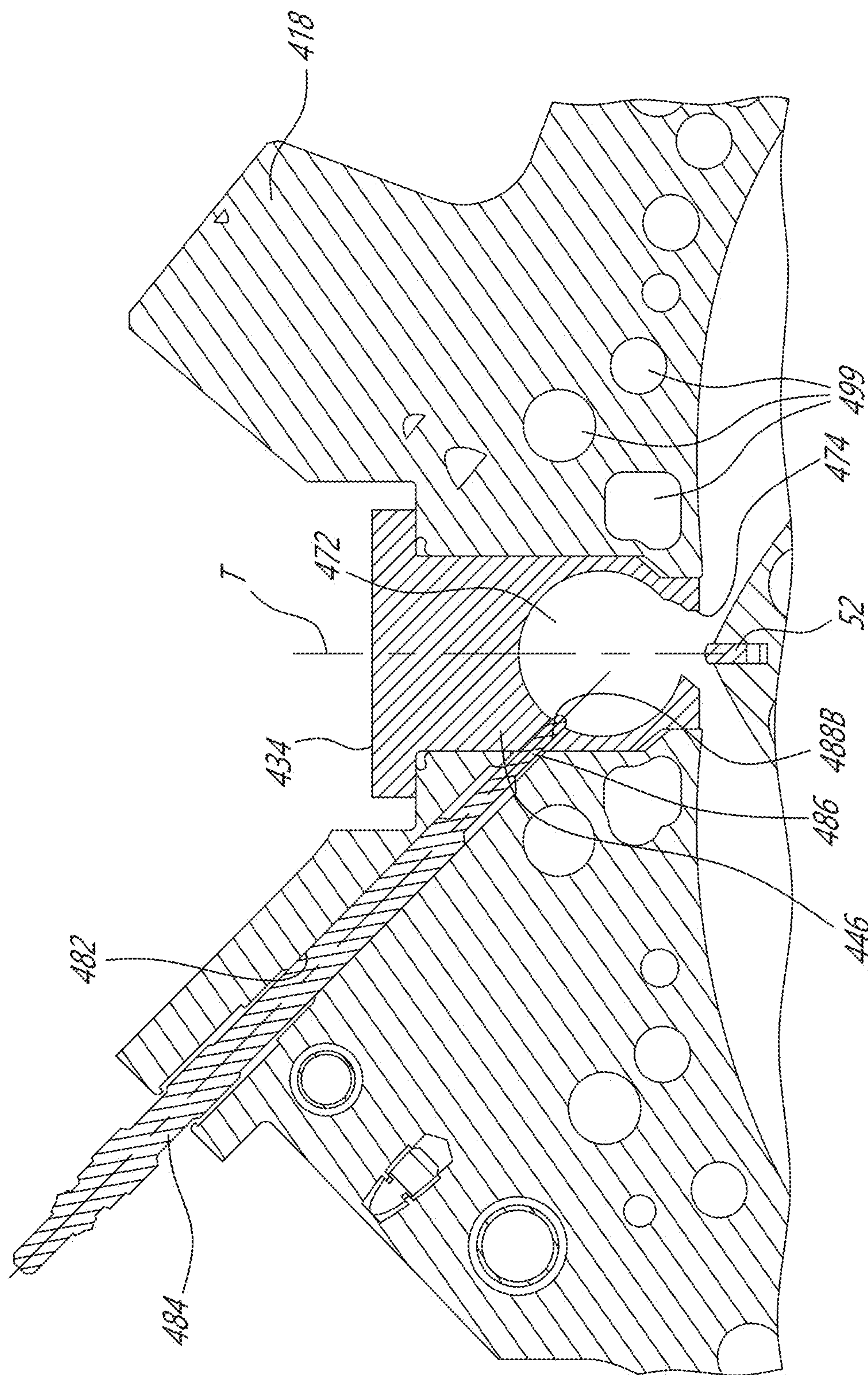
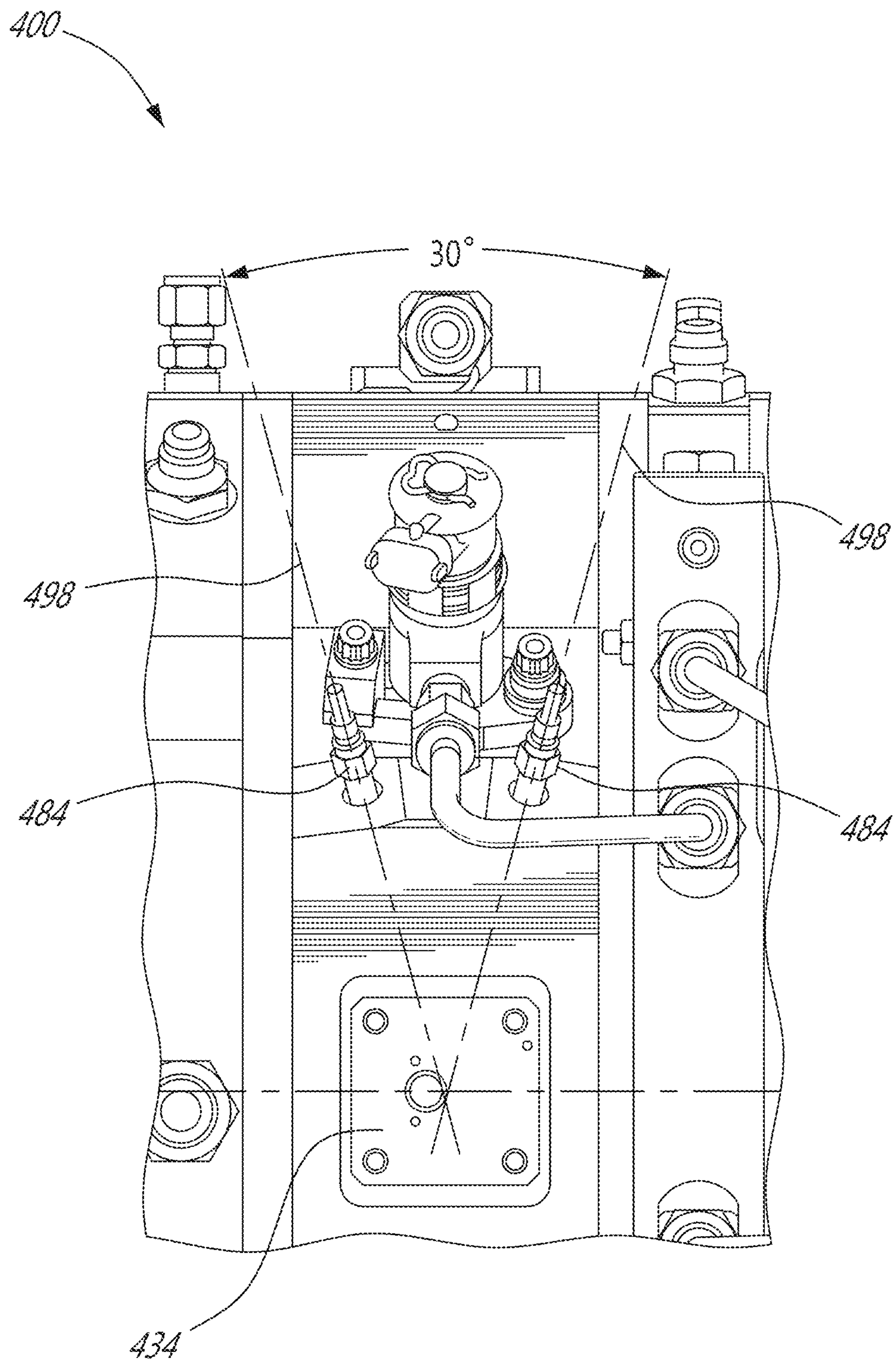
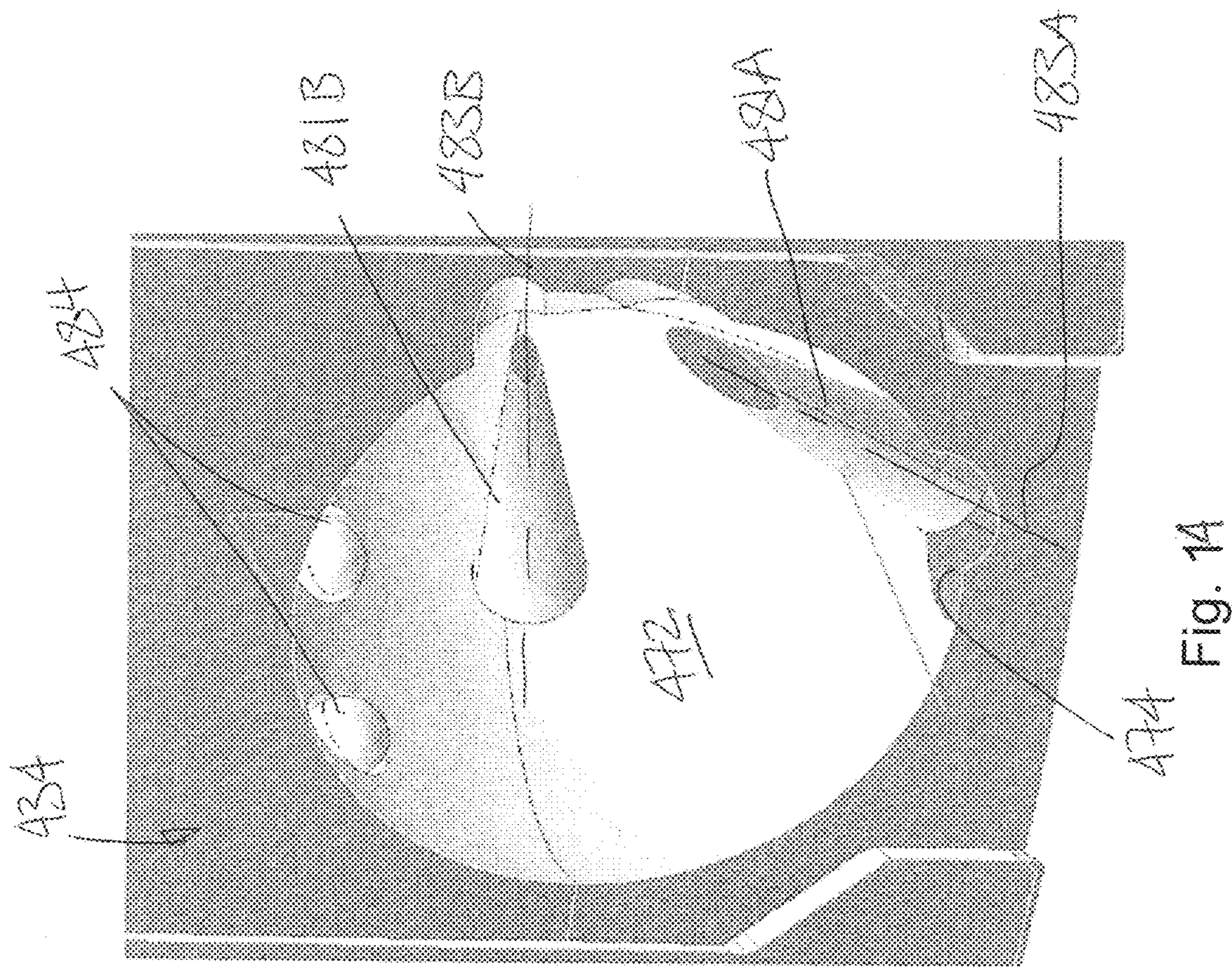


FIG. 11









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# INTERNAL COMBUSTION ENGINE WITH SPLIT PILOT INJECTION

## CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

This application is a continuation in part of U.S. application Ser. No. 15/153,277, filed May 12, 2016, the entire contents of which are incorporated by reference herein.

## TECHNICAL FIELD

The application relates generally to internal combustion engines and, more particularly, to such engines including a pilot injection.

## BACKGROUND OF THE ART

Some internal combustion engines include a pilot subchamber in communication with the main combustion or working chamber(s), and in which a pilot quantity of fuel is injected and ignited. The ignited fuel from the pilot subchamber then creates a torch performing ignition in the working chamber(s), in which a main quantity of fuel is injected.

## SUMMARY

In one aspect, there is provided an internal combustion engine comprising: a housing defining an internal cavity; an inner body sealingly moving within the internal cavity for defining at least one combustion chamber of variable volume; a pilot subchamber in communication with the at least one working chamber; an ignition element in communication with the pilot subchamber; a main injector communicating with the at least one combustion chamber; and a pilot injector having a tip in communication with the pilot subchamber, the tip of the pilot injector including at least a first injection hole defining a first spray direction and a second injection hole defining a second spray direction different from the first spray direction, the first spray direction extending toward the communication between the pilot subchamber and the at least one working chamber.

In another aspect, there is provided an internal combustion engine comprising: a housing defining an internal cavity; an inner body sealingly moving within the internal cavity for defining at least one combustion chamber of variable volume; a pilot subchamber in communication with the at least one working chamber; an ignition element in communication with the pilot subchamber; a main injector in communication with the at least one combustion chamber; and a pilot injector having a tip including at least first and second injection holes in communication with the pilot subchamber, the pilot injector having a central longitudinal axis aligned with the communication between the pilot subchamber and the at least one working chamber, the longitudinal axis intersecting the first injection hole, the second injection hole being spaced from the central longitudinal axis.

In a further aspect, there is provided a method of performing combustion in an internal combustion engine, the method comprising: simultaneously injecting first and second sprays of a pilot quantity of fuel with a pilot injector, the first spray being directed toward a communication between the pilot subchamber and a working chamber of the internal combustion engine, the second spray being directed away from the first spray; igniting the fuel within the pilot

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subchamber; injecting a main quantity of fuel in the working chamber with a main injector; and circulating the ignited fuel from the pilot subchamber into the working chamber to ignite the main quantity of fuel in the working chamber.

## DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Reference is now made to the accompanying figures in which:

FIG. 1 is a partial, schematic cross-sectional view of a rotary internal combustion engine in accordance with a particular embodiment;

FIG. 2 is a schematic cross-sectional view of an insert of the engine of FIG. 1;

FIG. 3 is a schematic cross-sectional view of an insert in accordance with another embodiment;

FIG. 4 is a schematic cross-sectional view of an insert in accordance with a further embodiment;

FIG. 5 is a schematic cross-sectional view of a rotary internal combustion engine in accordance with another embodiment;

FIG. 6 is a schematic cross-sectional view of a rotary internal combustion engine in accordance with another embodiment;

FIG. 7 is a schematic cross-sectional view of a rotary internal combustion engine in accordance with another embodiment;

FIG. 8 is a schematic cross-sectional view of a rotary internal combustion engine in accordance with another embodiment;

FIG. 9 is a partial, schematic cross-sectional view of a rotary internal combustion engine including an insert in accordance with a further embodiment;

FIG. 10 is a partial, schematic top view of the rotary engine and insert of FIG. 9;

FIG. 11 is a partial, schematic top view of the rotary engine of FIG. 9 with the insert removed, showing part of a rotor of the rotary engine through the insert opening;

FIG. 12 is a partial, schematic cross-sectional view of a rotary internal combustion engine in accordance with another embodiment;

FIG. 13 is a partial, schematic top view of the engine of FIG. 12; and

FIG. 14 is a schematic, tridimensional cross-sectional view of part of the rotary internal combustion engine of FIG. 9.

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Referring to FIG. 1, a rotary intermittent internal combustion engine 10 known as a Wankel engine is schematically and partially shown. In a particular embodiment, the rotary engine 10 is used in a compound cycle engine system such as described in Lents et al.'s U.S. Pat. No. 7,753,036 issued Jul. 13, 2010, or such as described in Julien et al.'s U.S. Pat. No. 7,775,044 issued Aug. 17, 2010, or such as described in Thomassin et al.'s U.S. patent publication No. 2015/0275749 published Oct. 1, 2015, or such as described in Bolduc et al.'s U.S. patent publication No. 2015/0275756 published Oct. 1, 2015, the entire contents of all of which are incorporated by reference herein. The compound cycle engine system may be used as a prime mover engine, such as on an aircraft or other vehicle, or in any other suitable application. In any event, in such a system, air is compressed by a compressor before entering the Wankel engine, and the engine drives one or more turbine(s) of the compound engine. In another embodiment, the rotary engine 10 is used



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without a turbocharger, with air at atmospheric pressure, and/or without compounding turbines.

The engine 10 comprises an outer body 12 having axially-spaced end walls 14 with a peripheral wall 18 extending therebetween to form an internal cavity 20. The inner surface 19 of the peripheral wall 18 of the cavity 20 has a profile defining two lobes, which is preferably an epitrochoid.

An inner body or rotor 24 is received within the cavity 20, with the geometrical axis of the rotor 24 being offset from and parallel to the axis of the outer body 12. The rotor 24 has axially spaced end faces 26 adjacent to the outer body end walls 14, and a peripheral face 28 extending therebetween. The peripheral face 28 defines three circumferentially-spaced apex portions 30 (only one of which is shown), and a generally triangular profile with outwardly arched sides. The apex portions 30 are in sealing engagement with the inner surface of peripheral wall 18 to form three rotating working chambers 32 (only two of which are partially shown) between the inner rotor 24 and outer body 12. A recess 38 is defined in the peripheral face 28 of the rotor 24 between each pair of adjacent apex portions 30, to form part of the corresponding chamber 32.

The working chambers 32 are sealed. Each rotor apex portion 30 has an apex seal 52 extending from one end face 26 to the other and protruding radially from the peripheral face 28. Each apex seal 52 is biased radially outwardly against the peripheral wall 18 through a respective spring. An end seal 54 engages each end of each apex seal 52, and is biased against the respective end wall 14 through a suitable spring. Each end face 26 of the rotor 24 has at least one arc-shaped face seal 60 running from each apex portion 30 to each adjacent apex portion 30, adjacent to but inwardly of the rotor periphery throughout its length. A spring urges each face seal 60 axially outwardly so that the face seal 60 projects axially away from the adjacent rotor end face 26 into sealing engagement with the adjacent end wall 14 of the cavity. Each face seal 60 is in sealing engagement with the end seal 54 adjacent each end thereof.

Although not shown in the Figures, the rotor 24 is journaled on an eccentric portion of a shaft and includes a phasing gear co-axial with the rotor axis, which is meshed with a fixed stator phasing gear secured to the outer body co-axially with the shaft. The shaft rotates the rotor 24 and the meshed gears guide the rotor 24 to perform orbital revolutions within the internal cavity 20. The shaft rotates three times for each complete rotation of the rotor 24 as it moves around the internal cavity 20. Oil seals are provided around the phasing gear to prevent leakage flow of lubricating oil radially outwardly thereof between the respective rotor end face 26 and outer body end wall 14.

At least one inlet port (not shown) is defined through one of the end walls 14 or the peripheral wall 18 for admitting air (atmospheric or compressed) into one of the working chambers 32, and at least one exhaust port (not shown) is defined through one of the end walls 14 or the peripheral wall 18 for discharge of the exhaust gases from the working chambers 32. The inlet and exhaust ports are positioned relative to each other and relative to the ignition member and fuel injectors (further described below) such that during each rotation of the rotor 24, each chamber 32 moves around the cavity 20 with a variable volume to undergo the four phases of intake, compression, expansion and exhaust, these phases being similar to the strokes in a reciprocating-type internal combustion engine having a four-stroke cycle.

In a particular embodiment, these ports are arranged such that the rotary engine 10 operates under the principle of the

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Miller or Atkinson cycle, with its volumetric compression ratio lower than its volumetric expansion ratio. In another embodiment, the ports are arranged such that the volumetric compression and expansion ratios are equal or similar to one another.

As described further below, a subchamber, which in the particular embodiment shown is a pilot subchamber 72, is defined in the outer body 12, for pilot fuel injection and ignition. In this example, the subchamber 72 is provided in an insert 34 received in a corresponding insert opening 36 defined through the peripheral wall 18 of the outer body 12 and in communication with the internal cavity 20, for pilot fuel injection and ignition. The peripheral wall 18 also has a main injector elongated hole 40 defined therethrough, in communication with the internal cavity 20 and spaced apart from the insert 34. A main fuel injector 42 is received and retained within this corresponding hole 40, with the tip 44 of the main injector 42 communicating with the cavity 20 at a point spaced apart from the insert 34. The main injector 42 is located rearwardly of the insert 34 with respect to the direction R of the rotor rotation and revolution, and is angled to direct fuel forwardly into each of the rotating chambers 32 sequentially with a tip hole pattern designed for an adequate spray.

Referring particularly to FIG. 2, in this example the insert includes an elongated body 46 extending across a thickness of the peripheral wall 18, with an enlarged flange 48 at its outer end which is biased away from a shoulder 50 defined in the peripheral wall 18, and against a gasket (not shown) made of an appropriate type of heat resistant material such as a silica based material. A washer 56, such as for example a steel or titanium washer, and spring 58, such as for example a wave spring or a Belleville spring, are provided between the flange 48 and the shoulder 50 of the peripheral wall 18. The spring 58 biases the body 46 against a cover 62 having a cross-section greater than that of the insert opening 36 and extending over an outer surface 64 of the peripheral wall 18. The cover 62 is connected to the peripheral wall 18, for example through brazing. Alternate types of connections can also be used, including but not limited to a connection through fasteners such as bolts, to help facilitate replacement of the insert if necessary.

The insert body 46 has an inner surface 66 which is continuous with the inner surface 19 of the peripheral wall 18 to define the cavity 20. The insert opening 36 in the wall 18 defines a flange 68 extending in the insert opening 36 adjacent the inner surface 19, and the inner end of the insert body 46 is complementarily shaped to engage this flange 68, with a gasket 70 being received therebetween.

In this example, the insert body 46 is made of a material having a greater heat resistance than that of the peripheral wall 18, which in a particular embodiment is made of aluminium. In this particular embodiment, the insert body 46 is made of an appropriate type of ceramic.

The insert body 46 has a pilot subchamber 72 defined therein in communication with the internal cavity 20. In the embodiment shown, the subchamber 72 has a circular cross-section; alternate shapes are also possible. The subchamber 72 communicates with the cavity through at least one opening 74 defined in the inner surface 66. The subchamber 72 has a shape forming a reduced cross-section adjacent the opening 74, such that the opening 74 defines a restriction to the flow between the subchamber 72 and the cavity 20. The opening 74 may have various shapes and/or be defined by a pattern of multiple holes. As can be seen in FIG. 2, the



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opening 74 has an area smaller than the maximum cross-sectional area of the subchamber 72, which is defined spaced apart from the opening 74.

The peripheral wall 18 has a pilot injector elongated hole 76 defined therethrough in proximity of the insert 34, extending at a non-zero angle with respect to a surface of an outer wall of the insert 34 and with respect to the longitudinal direction of the insert (which in the embodiment shown corresponds to the direction of the transverse axis T of the outer body 12). The pilot injector hole 76 is in communication with the subchamber 72. A pilot fuel injector 78 is received and retained within the corresponding hole 76, with the tip 80 of the pilot injector 78 being received in the subchamber 72. As can be seen in FIG. 2, the insert body 46 has an injector opening defined therethrough providing the communication between the pilot injector elongated hole 76 and the subchamber 72, and the tip 80 of the pilot injector 78 is received in the subchamber 72 through this injector opening, with a major part of the pilot injector 78 being received in the pilot injector elongated hole 76 outside of the insert 34. The opening providing the communication between the pilot injector elongated hole 76 and the subchamber 72 has an area smaller than the maximum cross-sectional area of the subchamber 72.

The insert body 46 and cover 62 have an ignition element elongated hole 82 defined therein extending along the direction of the transverse axis T of the outer body 12, also in communication with the subchamber 72. As can be seen in FIG. 2, the ignition element elongated hole 82 and the subchamber 72 communicate through an opening having an area smaller than the maximum cross-sectional area of the subchamber 72. An ignition element or igniter 84 is received and retained within the corresponding hole 82, with the tip 86 of the ignition element 84 being received in the subchamber 72. In the embodiment shown, the ignition element 84 is a glow plug. Alternate types of ignition elements 84 which may be used include, but are not limited to, plasma ignition, laser ignition, spark plug, microwave, etc. In a particular embodiment, the ignition element 84 may be turned off when the walls of the subchamber 72 are sufficiently hot to ignite the fuel in the subchamber 72.

The pilot injector 78 and main injector 42 inject fuel, which in a particular embodiment is heavy fuel e.g. diesel, kerosene (jet fuel), equivalent biofuel, etc. into the chambers 32. Alternately, the fuel may be any other adequate type of fuel suitable for injection as described, including non-heavy fuel such as for example gasoline or liquid hydrogen fuel. In a particular embodiment, at least 0.5% and up to 20% of the fuel is injected through the pilot injector 78, and the remainder is injected through the main injector 42. In another particular embodiment, at most 10% of the fuel is injected through the pilot injector 78. In another particular embodiment, at most 5% of the fuel is injected through the pilot injector 78. The main injector 42 injects the fuel such that each rotating chamber 32 when in the combustion phase contains a mixture of air and fuel, which in a particular embodiment is a lean mixture.

Referring to FIG. 3, an insert 134 according to another embodiment is shown, engaged to the same outer body 12. The insert 134 extends across a thickness of the peripheral wall 18, and includes an inner body portion 146 and an outer body portion 162 which are attached together, for example through a high temperature braze joint 188. The outer body portion 162 has an enlarged flange 148 at its outer end which abuts the outer surface 64 of the peripheral wall 18 and is connected thereto, for example through bolts with appropriate sealing such as a gasket or crush seal (not shown).

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Alternate types of connections can also be used, including but not limited to a brazed connection.

The inner body portion 146 has an inner surface 166 which is continuous with the inner surface 19 of the peripheral wall 18 to define the cavity 20. The inner end of the inner body portion 146 is complementarily shaped to engage the flange 68 extending in the insert opening 36 adjacent the inner surface 19, with a gasket 70 being received therebetween.

In this particular embodiment, the body portions 146, 162 are made of an appropriate type of super alloy such as a Nickel based super alloy.

The subchamber configured as a pilot subchamber 72 is defined in the insert 134 at the junction between the body portions 146, 162, with the inner body portion 146 defining the opening 74 for communication between the subchamber 72 and the cavity 20. The outer body portion 162 has the ignition element elongated hole 82 defined therein along the direction of the transverse axis T and in communication with the subchamber 72. The ignition element 84 is received and retained within the corresponding hole 82, for example through threaded engagement. As in the previous embodiment, the tip 86 of the ignition element 84 is received in the subchamber 72.

Referring to FIG. 4, an insert 234 according to another embodiment is shown. The insert 234 is received in a corresponding insert opening 236 defined through the peripheral wall 18. The insert 234 includes an inner body portion 246 and an outer body portion 262 which are attached together, for example through a high temperature braze joint, with the subchamber 72 being defined at the junction of the two portions 246, 262. The inner body portion 246 defines the opening 74 for communication between the subchamber 72 and the cavity 20.

The outer body portion 262 has the ignition element elongated hole 82 defined therethrough in communication with the subchamber 72. The outer body portion 262 includes an inner enlarged section 245 connected to the inner body portion 246 and defining the subchamber 72. The enlarged section 245 extends substantially across the width of the insert opening 236 around the subchamber 72, then tapers to a reduced width section 247 extending therefrom. The reduced width section 247 has at its outer end an enlarged flange 248 which abuts a shoulder 250 defined in the outer surface 64 of the peripheral wall 18 around the insert opening 236. An outer section 249, which in the embodiment shown has a width intermediate that of the sections 245 and 247, extends outwardly from the flange 248. The flange is connected to the shoulder, for example through bolts (not shown) with appropriate sealing such as a crush seal or a gasket (not shown) made of high temperature material, for example a silica based material or grafoil, between the flange 248 and shoulder 250. Alternate types of connections can also be used.

The inner body portion 246 has an inner surface 266 which is continuous with the inner surface 19 of the peripheral wall 18 to define the cavity 20. The inner body portion 246 includes a groove defined therearound near the inner surface 266, in which an appropriate seal 251, for example a silica based gasket tape, is received in contact with the walls of the insert opening 236. In this embodiment, the walls of the insert openings 236 are straight adjacent the inner surface 19, i.e. there is no flange adjacent the inner surface 19.

The volume of the pilot subchamber 72 in the insert 34, 134, 234 is selected to obtain a stoichiometric mixture around ignition within an acceptable delay, with some of the



exhaust product from the previous combustion cycle remaining in the subchamber 72. In a particular embodiment, the volume of the subchamber 72 is at least 0.5% and up to 3.5% of the displacement volume, with the displacement volume being defined as the difference between the maximum and minimum volumes of one chamber 32. In another particular embodiment, the volume of the subchamber 72 corresponds to from about 0.625% to about 1.25% of the displacement volume.

The volume of the pilot subchamber 72 may also be defined as a portion of the combustion volume, which is the sum of the minimum chamber volume  $V_{min}$  (including the recess 38) and the volume of the subchamber 72 itself. In a particular embodiment the subchamber 72 has a volume corresponding to from 5% to 25% of the combustion volume, i.e.  $V_2=5\%$  to  $25\%$  of  $(V_2+V_{min})$ . In another particular embodiment, the subchamber 72 has a volume corresponding to from 10% to 12% of the combustion volume, i.e.  $V_2=10\%$  to  $12\%$  of  $(V_2+V_{min})$ .

The subchamber 72 may help create a stable and powerful ignition zone to ignite the overall lean main combustion chamber 32 to create the stratified charge combustion. The subchamber 72 may improve combustion stability, particularly but not exclusively for a rotary engine which operates with heavy fuel below the self-ignition of fuel. The insert 34, 134, 234 made of a heat resistant material may advantageously create a hot wall around the subchamber which may further help with ignition stability.

The teachings herein are applicable to any suitable types of intermittent internal combustion engines, including reciprocating engines and many rotary engine types, and not just Wankel engines. Therefore, in another embodiment, the engine with subchamber the 72 may be a non-Wankel engine. A "non-Wankel" engine, as used in this description and the appended claims, means a rotary engine suitable for use with the present invention, but excluding Wankel type engines.

In a particular embodiment, the rotary engine may be a single or eccentric type rotary engine in which the rotor rotates about a fixed center of rotation. For example, the rotary engine may be a sliding vane engine, such as described in U.S. Pat. No. 5,524,587 issued Jun. 11, 1996 or in U.S. Pat. No. 5,522,356 issued Jun. 4, 1996, the entire contents of both of which are incorporated by reference herein.

Referring to FIG. 5, an example of a sliding vane engine 100 is shown. The engine 100 includes an outer body 112 defining an internal cavity 20 receiving a rotor 124 having a number of vanes 125. The rotor 124 includes an inner hub assembly 127 rotating about a first axis and an outer hub assembly 129 rotating about a second axis offset from the first axis, with the two hub assemblies 127, 129 being mechanically linked. The vanes 125 are pivotally connected to the inner hub assembly 127 and are slidingly engaged through slots defined between adjacent sections of the outer hub assembly 129. The sections of the outer hub assembly 129 are thus sealingly engaged to the vanes 125 at different distances from the first axis of the inner hub assembly 127, defining a plurality of chambers 32 of variable volume within the cavity 20 around the rotor 124.

In the embodiment shown, the engine 100 includes the subchamber 72 described above, in this example defined in the insert 34 received in an insert opening 36 of a peripheral wall 118 of the outer body 112. The peripheral wall 118 also has a main injector elongated hole 40 defined therethrough, in communication with the internal cavity 20 and spaced apart from the insert 34. The insert is biased against the

cover 62 retaining the insert 34 within the insert opening 36. The insert 34 is made of a material having a greater heat resistance than that of the peripheral wall 118 and defines the pilot subchamber 72 in communication with the internal cavity 20 through at least one opening 74. The peripheral wall 118 and/or the insert 34 has the pilot injector elongated hole 76 and the ignition element elongated hole 82 defined therethrough in communication with the subchamber 72. Other embodiments may be provided for the insert in the engine 100, including, but not limited to, the other inserts 134, 234 described above.

In another particular embodiment, the rotary engine may be an oscillatory rotating engine, including two or more rotors rotating at different angular velocities, causing the distance between portions of the rotors to vary and as such the chamber volume to change. Referring to FIG. 6, an example of such an engine is shown. The engine 200 includes an inner rotor 224 and an outer body or rotor 212 rotating at different angular velocities, the outer rotor 212 defining an internal cavity 20 in which the inner rotor 212 is received. Chambers 32 of variable volume are defined within the cavity 20 around the inner rotor 224.

In the embodiment shown, the engine 200 includes the subchamber 72 described above, in this example defined in the insert 34 received in an insert opening 36 of a peripheral wall 218 of the outer body 212. The peripheral wall 218 also has the main injector elongated hole 40 defined therethrough spaced apart from the insert 34, and the peripheral wall 218 and/or the insert 34 has the pilot injector elongated hole 76 and the ignition element elongated hole 82 defined therethrough. Other embodiments may be provided for the insert in the engine 200, including, but not limited to, the other inserts 134, 234 described above.

In another particular embodiment, the rotary engine is a planetary rotating engine having a different geometry than that of the Wankel engine. Referring to FIG. 7, an example of such an engine is shown. The engine 300 includes an outer body 312 forming an internal cavity 20 with a peripheral inner surface thereof having an epitrochoid profile defining three lobes. The engine 300 also includes a rotor 324 with four apex portions 330 in sealing engagement with the peripheral inner surface to form four rotating working chambers 32 of variable volume within the cavity 20 around the rotor 324. The rotor 324 is journaled on an eccentric portion of a shaft and performs orbital revolutions within the cavity 20.

In the embodiment shown, the engine 300 includes the subchamber 72 described above, in this example defined in the insert 34 received in an insert opening 36 of a peripheral wall 318 of the outer body 312. The peripheral wall 318 also has the main injector elongated hole 40 defined therethrough spaced apart from the insert 34, and the peripheral wall 318 and/or the insert 34 has the pilot injector elongated hole 76 and the ignition element elongated hole 82 defined therethrough. Other embodiments may be provided for the insert in the engine 300, including, but not limited to, the other inserts 134, 234 described above.

The subchamber 72 may be provided integrally within the outer body 12, 112, 212, 312 of the engine 10, 100, 200, 300, provided the outer body 12, 112, 212, 312 is made of a material having adequate heat resistance and such other properties required to provide a suitable outer body. Referring to FIG. 8, the Wankel engine 10 is shown with the subchamber 72, pilot injector hole 76 and ignition element hole 82 integrally defined in the outer body 12, more particularly in the peripheral wall 18. In a particular embodiment, the outer body 12 is made of a material having a heat



resistance greater than that of aluminium. In a particular embodiment, the outer body **12** is made of an appropriate type of ceramic or of an appropriate type of super alloy, such as for example a Nickel based super alloy. Though not shown, a wear insert may be provided in the internal cavity **20** for contacting the rotor sliding surfaces. The integral subchamber may be applied to any of the rotary engine configurations contemplated by the present description.

Referring to FIG. 9, a rotary engine **400** and an insert **434** according to another embodiment is shown. Although the engine **400** is depicted as a Wankel engine, with an outer body including a peripheral wall **418** extending between two axially spaced apart end walls **14** to define an internal cavity **20** receiving a rotor **24**, it is understood that the engine **400** may alternately be any other adequate type of intermittent internal combustion engine, including, but not limited to, the rotary engines described above.

The insert **434** is removably received in an insert opening **436** extending across a thickness of the peripheral wall **418** of the outer body of the engine **400**. The insert **434** includes an elongated insert body **446**, with an enlarged flange **448** at its outer end which abuts shoulders **464** defined by the insert opening **436** having an enlarged cross-section adjacent its communication with the outer surface of the peripheral wall **418**. Alternately, the flange **448** can abut the outer surface of the peripheral wall **418**. A seal **448A** is disposed between the flange **448** and the shoulders **464** to seal the insert opening **436**. The seal **448A** can be a C-seal or any other suitable seal. The insert opening **436** is located at or near top dead center, downstream of the main fuel injector **42** communicating with the internal cavity **20** of the engine **400** and upstream of a maximum temperature and pressure region of the internal cavity **20**. The maximum pressure and temperature region is defined as a region of the chambers **32** just after top dead center. The fuel in the internal cavity **20** is ignited before top dead center (BTDC) and releases its energy such that maximum compression of the gas mixture is obtained just after top dead center (ATDC) (i.e. just after the minimum volume for the chambers **32**). In a particular embodiment, the maximum pressure obtained in this region is in the order of 1500 psi.

The insert body **446** has an inner surface **466** which is continuous with an inner surface **19** of the peripheral wall **418** defining the internal cavity **20**. The insert opening **436** has a reduced cross-section adjacent the inner surface **19**, the reduced cross-section being defined by a flange **468** of the peripheral wall **418** surrounding and protruding into the insert opening **436** adjacent the inner surface **19**. The inner end of the insert body **446** is complementarily shaped to engage this flange **468**; optionally, a gasket may be received between the insert body **446** and flange **468**, for example at **470**. In the embodiment shown, the outer surface of the flange **468** abutting the insert body **446** is frusto-conical such that a thickness of the flange **468** is progressively reduced toward a central axis of the insert opening **436**; other configurations are also possible.

The insert body **446** has a subchamber configured as a pilot subchamber **472** defined therein in communication with the internal cavity **20**. In the embodiment shown, the subchamber **472** has a circular cross-section; alternate shapes are also possible. The subchamber **472** communicates with the cavity **20** through at least one opening **474** defined in the inner surface **466**.

In this embodiment, the peripheral wall **418** has a pilot injector elongated hole **476** defined therethrough in proximity of the insert **434** and communicating with the insert opening **436**. The pilot injector elongated hole **476** has a

shape similar to the pilot injector elongated hole **76** described above. The pilot injector hole **476** is in communication with the subchamber **472** through an injector opening **488A** defined in the insert body **446**, and which has an area smaller than the maximum cross-sectional area of the subchamber **472**. A pilot fuel injector **478** is received and retained within the corresponding hole **476**. However, in this embodiment, the pilot fuel injector **478** extends with its tip **480** received in the pilot injector hole **476** without any part of the pilot fuel injector **478** protruding in the insert opening **436**; the injector opening **488A** is thus free of the pilot fuel injector **478**. The pilot fuel injector **478** is clear from the subchamber **472** and the insert opening **436** to allow removal of the insert **434** without the need to removing the pilot fuel injector **478**.

Referring to FIGS. 10 and 11, a threaded hole **494** is provided (e.g. centrally disposed) in the flange **448** of the insert **434**, configured to receive and having a shape complementary to that of a threaded tool. Upon engagement with the threaded hole **494**, the threaded tool may facilitate removal of the insert **434** from the insert opening **436** when required, for example for inspection or maintenance.

In the embodiment shown, the insert **434** is removably retained in the insert opening **436** by four threaded fasteners such as bolts **496** (FIG. 10) engaging the flange **448** of the insert **434** and the peripheral wall **418** through corresponding threaded holes **448B** (FIG. 11) to secure the insert **434** with respect to the peripheral wall **418**. It is understood that other types of fasteners allowing for the insert to be removably retained (e.g. retained such as to be removable without requiring to break, cut or damage the insert, wall or fastening mechanism) and/or different numbers of fasteners can also be used (e.g. one or more).

Referring to FIG. 12, the peripheral wall **418** has at least one ignition element elongated hole **482** defined therein, angled with respect to the transverse axis **T** of the outer body **12** and in communication with the subchamber **472** and the insert opening **436**. The ignition element elongated hole **482** and the subchamber **472** communicate through an opening **488B** in the insert body **446** aligned with the hole **182** and having an area smaller than the maximum cross-sectional area of the subchamber **472**. An ignition element **484** is received and retained within the corresponding ignition element elongated hole **482** in heat transfer communication with the subchamber **472**. In the embodiment shown, a tip **486** of the ignition element **484** is received in the subchamber **472**. Alternately, the tip **486** of the ignition element **484** can be outside of the subchamber **472**, opening **488B** and/or insert opening **436** (for example, so that no part of the ignition element **484** penetrates the insert opening **436**), and the heat transfer communication may be performed with or without a fluid communication between the ignition element elongated hole **482** and the subchamber **472** (for example, the opening **488B** may be omitted).

Referring to FIG. 13, in a particular embodiment, two ignition elements **484** are provided in communication with the subchamber **472**. The ignition elements **484** are provided in different planes, so that each ignition element **484** is extending along a respective axis **498**, the axes **498** intersecting. In a particular embodiment, the axes are disposed at a 30 degrees angle from each other. Alternately, the number and/or orientation of the ignition elements **484** can differ.

As can be seen in FIGS. 9 and 12, a plurality of coolant passages **499** are defined throughout the peripheral wall **418** (and although not shown, similar coolant passages may extend through the peripheral walls **18**, **118**, **218**, **318** described above), including, but not limited to, in proximity



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of the insert **434**. The coolant passages **499** are in fluid communication with one another by being part of a cooling circuitry through which a liquid coolant (e.g. water) circulates in a closed loop with a heat exchanger or any other element suitable to cool the used coolant for recirculation to the engine. The size and number of the coolant passages **499** are selected such as to be able to maintain the peripheral wall **418** at temperatures below the applicable maximum threshold for the material of the peripheral wall **418**.

In the embodiment shown in FIGS. **12-13**, the ignition elements **484** extend within the peripheral wall **418** along most of their length, which may facilitate cooling of the ignition elements **484** using the cooling circuitry provided in the outer body through the peripheral wall **418**.

In a particular embodiment, the presence of coolant passages **499** can impede inspection, for example preventing the provision of a dedicated inspection port, particularly for the hotter regions where more cooling is required and where the presence of such a port could disturb the cooling pattern. In a particular embodiment, the presence of the insert **34, 134, 234, 434** allows for the insert opening **36, 236, 436** to be used as an inspection port, taking advantage of this existing opening to perform visual inspection of the internal cavity **20** through a region of the peripheral wall which includes the cooling passages **499**. Since the insert **34, 134, 234, 434** is located adjacent the fuel injectors which are typically readily accessible in use for maintenance purposes, in a particular embodiment the insert **34, 134, 234, 434** is also readily accessible in use to be removed from the engine without the need to move the engine. Prior methods of rotary engine inspection include inspection through the inlet or outlet ports; the insert opening **36, 236, 436** is closer to the high pressure and temperature region of the engine than the ports, and accordingly in a particular embodiment provides for a better access to the portions of the internal cavity **20** which are most susceptible to damage. Prior methods of rotary engine inspection also include inspection through the hole left by removal of the ignition element; however, such inspection requires the use of inspection tools, for example a boroscope, since the hole is too small to be usable for visual and/or manual inspection. In a particular embodiment, the insert opening **36, 236, 436** is advantageously sized to allow for visual and/or manual inspection.

In a particular embodiment, inspection in the internal cavity **20** (i.e. of features of the outer body inside the internal cavity **20** and/or of the rotor **24** received therein) is performed in accordance with the following. If the ignition element(s) **484** extend(s) within the peripheral wall **418** and protrude(s) into the insert opening **436**, the ignition element(s) **484** is/are disengaged from the insert **434**. In an embodiment where the ignition element(s) is/are not engaged in the insert **434**, or where the ignition element(s) **84**, is/are received in the insert **34, 134, 234** without extending through the peripheral wall such as to be removable together with the insert **34, 134, 234** in a same step, this step may accordingly be omitted.

Similarly, if a fuel injector extends within the peripheral wall and protrudes into the insert opening, the fuel injector is disengaged from the insert. In an embodiment where the fuel injector is not engaged in the insert, received in the insert without extending through the peripheral wall such as to be removable together with the insert in a same step, this step may accordingly be omitted.

The insert **34, 134, 234, 434** is then removed from the insert opening **36, 236, 436** of the outer body, thereby providing access to the internal cavity **20** through the insert opening **36, 236, 436**. To facilitate removal of the insert by

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a user, a threaded tool may be inserted into the threaded hole **494** provided in the insert **434** (a similar threaded hole may be provided in any of the inserts described herein) and a force is then applied on the threaded tool, for example a pulling force.

Once the insert **34, 134, 234, 434** is removed, the internal cavity **20** is inspected through the insert opening **36, 236, 436**. The inspection can be done visually and/or manually. The inspection can include, but is not limited to, any one or any combination of inspecting the condition of the apex seals **52**, inspecting the condition and/or operation of the spring(s) biasing the apex seals **52**, inspecting the condition of a coating applied to the inner surface **19** of the peripheral wall **18, 118, 218, 318, 418** and/or to the inner surface **491** of the end walls **14**, inspecting the condition of the rotor **24** itself (e.g. presence of cracks), verifying if liquid coolant and/or oil is present in the chambers **32**, inspecting the fuel injector (e.g. its tip), particularly for the fuel injector communicating with the chamber but having a configuration allowing the insert to be removed without prior removal of the fuel injector, etc. Inspection of the condition of the coating can include inspection to detect one or more of pitting, erosion, delamination and cracks in the coating surface.

Following the results of inspection, appropriate maintenance and/or repair operations may be performed. Non-limiting examples of such operations include, with a prior step of disassembly of the engine in whole or in part when required:

When the condition of the apex seals **52** and/or of the spring(s) biasing the apex seals **52** is determined to be inadequate following the inspection, replacing damaged ones of the apex seals **52** and the springs;

When the condition of the coating applied to the inner surface **19** of the peripheral wall **18, 118, 218, 318, 418** and/or to the inner surface **491** of the end walls **14** is determined to be inadequate following the inspection, recoating the parts where the defects were detected, optionally stripping the existing coating before the recoating operation;

When the condition of the rotor **24** itself is determined to be inadequate following the inspection, performing required repairs to the rotor (e.g. weld repair or replacement) or replacing the rotor as a whole;

When the presence of liquid coolant in the chambers **32** is detected, replacing a broken or defective seal of the cooling (e.g. o-ring), and/or inspecting the outer body to find a crack responsible for the leak and repairing the crack or replacing the damaged part;

When the presence of oil in the chambers **32** is detected, replacing a broken or defective oil seal, or repair or replacement of the element responsible for the leak, with optional pressure testing to determine which element is responsible if the failure is not apparent;

When damage to the fuel injector (e.g. pilot fuel injector) is detected, replacing or repairing the fuel injector.

In a particular embodiment, a boroscope is optionally inserted through the insert opening **436**, as a follow-up to a preliminary visual inspection, to further inspect the internal cavity **20**. The use of the boroscope can advantageously provide a wider access to the internal cavity **20**.

Referring back to FIGS. **10** and **11**, the width **490** of the internal cavity is defined as the distance between the inner surfaces **491** of the end walls **14** along a direction parallel to a rotational axis RA of the rotor **24**. In a particular embodiment and referring to FIG. **11**, the width **492** of the insert opening **436**, i.e. of its cross-section, defined perpendicu-



larly to the thickness of the peripheral wall **418** (e.g. parallel to the rotational axis RA), is sufficiently large throughout the thickness of the peripheral wall **418** to be able to perform an unaided (i.e. without inspection instruments or tools) visual inspection of the internal cavity **20** through the insert opening **436**; the minimal width is thus sized to correspond to, at least, a minimum dimension required for visual inspection, based on the size of the human eye.

In the embodiment of FIG. 9, the minimum width **492'** of the insert opening **436** is a minimum diameter, since the insert opening **436** has a circular cross-section, and is located adjacent the inner surface **19** of the peripheral wall **418**, i.e. at the radially innermost point of the insert opening **436**. In a particular embodiment, the minimum width **492'** is at least equal to  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the width **490** of the internal cavity **20**. In a particular embodiment, the minimum width **492'** of the insert opening **436** is between  $\frac{1}{3}$  and  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the width **490** of the internal cavity **20**. For example, in a particular embodiment, the minimum width or diameter **492'** of the insert opening **436** is at least 0.75 inch; in a particular embodiment, such a minimum width is sufficient to allow for visual inspection through the insert opening. In particular embodiments, the minimum width **492'** of the insert opening **436** may correspond to any one of the following: at least 0.8 inch; at least 0.85 inch; at least 0.9 inch; at least 0.93 inch; about 0.93 inch; at least 1 inch. It is understood that the particular dimensions provided herein are also applicable to the insert openings **36**, **236** of the other embodiments discussed.

The ability to perform visual inspection is highly desirable, and in a particular embodiment allows for reduction of the costs and/or time associated with preliminary inspections, as opposed to engine configurations which require instruments and/or disassembly of the housing to be inspected; a larger insert opening **36**, **236**, **436** provides better exposure of the internal cavity **20** for visual inspection.

It is understood that the removable insert **34**, **134**, **234**, **434** allowing inspection of the internal cavity **20** through the insert opening **36**, **236**, **436** is not limited to an insert defining a pilot subchamber for pilot ignition. For example, in particular embodiments, the removable insert **34**, **134**, **234**, **434** allowing inspection of the internal cavity **20** through the insert opening **36**, **236**, **436** is an insert defining other types of subchambers, such as for example a pre-chamber for combustion, where the whole volume of fuel is injected for ignition—i.e. where the main injector is in communication with the pre-chamber in the insert. Other configurations are also possible.

Referring to FIG. 9, in a particular embodiment, the tip **480** of the pilot injector **478**, which is in direct communication with the pilot subchamber **472**, includes at least two injection holes **480A**, **480B** configured to inject fuel in two sprays **481A**, **481B** extending along different directions. Each injection hole **481A**, **481B** is in fluid communication with the injection mechanism of the pilot injector **478**, so that the pilot quantity of fuel is injected through the injection holes **481A**, **481B** simultaneously, with a relative size of the injection holes **481A**, **481B** determining the proportion of fuel injected in each direction. As can be also seen in FIG. 14, each spray **481A**, **481B** is illustrated by a cone, showing an exemplary fuel dispersal pattern following injection of fuel through the respective injection hole **480A**, **480B**. In a particular embodiment, the direction of the spray **481A**, **481B** is defined by the central axis **483A**, **483B** of the dispersal pattern, i.e. the central axis of the cone.

It can be seen that the spray direction defined by the first injection hole **480A** extends toward the communication between the pilot subchamber **472** and each working chamber **32**. For example, in the embodiment shown, the axis **483A** of the first spray **481A** extends through the opening **474** in the insert **434** which defines the communication between the pilot subchamber **472** and each working chamber **32** of the internal cavity **20**.

In the embodiment shown, the spray direction defined by the second injection hole **480B** extends away from the communication between the pilot subchamber **472** and the working chamber **32**. For example, the axis **483B** of the second spray **481B** intersects the wall of the pilot subchamber **472** away from the opening **474** in the insert **434** which defines the communication between the pilot subchamber **472** and the working chamber **32**. The second spray direction **483B** is shown as extending toward the ignition elements **484**. Although in the embodiment shown the second spray **481B** does not directly intersect the ignition elements **484**, it is understood that alternately the second spray **481B** could directly intersect the ignition element(s) **484** and/or their communication with the pilot subchamber **472**. It is also understood that the second spray **481B** could be directed to any location in the pilot subchamber **472** not corresponding to the direction of the communication between the pilot subchamber **472** and the working chamber **32**; for example, the second spray **481B** could be directed so that at a given engine speed, the interaction between the second spray **481B** and an air swirl present in the pilot subchamber **472** (determined, for example, by computational fluid dynamics (CFD) analysis) provides for the fuel and air to be sufficiently mixed in the vicinity of the ignition element(s) **484**.

In the embodiment shown and as can be seen in FIG. 9, the central longitudinal axis L of the pilot injector **478** extends through the opening **474** in the insert **434** which defines the communication between the pilot subchamber **472** and the working chamber **32**. The central longitudinal axis L intersects the first injection hole **480A**, and in the embodiment shown corresponds to the axis **483A** of the direction of the first spray **481A**. The second injection hole **480B** is spaced from the central longitudinal axis L of the pilot injector **478**. It is however understood that other orientations for the pilot injector **478** are also possible.

In a particular embodiment, the first injection hole **480A** which directs fuel toward the communication with the working chamber **32** has a greater cross-sectional area than that of the second injection hole **480B** which directs fuel away from the communication with the working chamber **32**, e.g., toward the ignition element(s) **484**. In a particular embodiment, this allows for a major part of the pilot fuel to be directed toward the communication with the working chamber **32** while providing for some fuel flow toward the ignition element(s) **484**, away from the communication with the working chamber **32**. For example, in a particular embodiment, the pilot injector performs a total injection of 40 cc of fuel, with the first and second holes **480A**, **480B** being relatively sized so that 15 cc (37.5%) of the pilot fuel is directed toward the ignition element(s) **484** and the remaining 25 cc (62.5%) of the pilot fuel is directed toward the communication with the working chamber **32**. It is however understood that the particular fuel quantities are provided as an example only, and that proportions can vary, including, but not limited to, for engines having different compression ratios and/or subchamber sizes. For example, in another embodiment, 20% of the pilot fuel is directed toward the ignition element(s) **484** and the remaining 80%



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of the pilot fuel is directed toward the communication with the working chamber 32. Other proportions are also possible.

Moreover, although two injection holes 480A, 480B are shown, it is understood that two or more injection holes could be directed toward the communication with the working chamber 32 and/or two or more injection holes could be directed away from the communication with the working chamber 32, for example toward the ignition element(s) 484.

Although described with reference to the engine 400 shown in FIGS. 9-11 and 14, it is understood that the pilot injection with split sprays may be used with the pilot injector 78, 478 of any of the engines 10, 100, 200, 300 of FIGS. 1-8 and 12-13, and in any other suitable internal combustion engine configuration, including, but not limited to, non-rotary internal combustion engines such as reciprocating engines where the inner body sealingly moving within the internal cavity is a reciprocating piston defining a single working chamber of variable volume in the internal cavity.

In use, in a particular embodiment, performing combustion in an internal combustion engine (any of the engines shown, a reciprocating engine, etc.) includes simultaneously injecting first and second sprays 481A, 481B of a pilot quantity of fuel with the pilot injector 78, 478, where the first spray 481A is directed toward the communication 74, 474 between the pilot subchamber 72, 472 and the working chamber 32, and the second spray 481B is directed away from the first spray 481A. The fuel is ignited within the pilot subchamber 72, 472. The main quantity of fuel is injected in the working chamber 32 with the main injector 42, and the ignited fuel is circulated from the pilot subchamber 72, 472 into the working chamber 32 to ignite the main quantity of fuel in the working chamber 32.

In a particular embodiment, the first spray 481A is directed along the central longitudinal axis L of the pilot injector 78, 478, and/or the second spray 481B is directed toward the ignition element(s) 84, 484. For example, when two spaced apart ignition elements 484 are provided, the second spray 481B may be directed between the two ignition elements 484.

It is understood that the fuel may be ignited without the help of the ignition elements 84, 484; for example, once the engine is started, the walls of the pilot subchamber 72, 472 may be sufficiently hot to ignite the fuel, so that the ignition element(s) 84, 484 may be turned off.

As mentioned above, in a particular embodiment the first spray 481A includes a greater volume of fuel than that of the second spray 481B.

In a particular embodiment, the split pilot injection defined by the two different sprays 481A, 481B from the pilot injector 78, 478 allows to direct part of the pilot injection towards the ignition element(s) 84, 484 to ensure proper ignition in the subchamber 72, 472, while directing another part of the pilot injection through the pilot subchamber 72, 472 and into the working chamber 32 to ensure that the main fuel charge is ignited as a result of the combustion in the pilot subchamber 72, 472. In a particular embodiment, the split pilot injection provides for improved ignition and combustion efficiency as well as easier engine starts and relight than a corresponding pilot injection with a single spray.

The above description is meant to be exemplary only, and one skilled in the art will recognize that changes may be made to the embodiments described without departing from the scope of the invention(s) disclosed. For example, the mechanical arrangements of the engines described above are merely examples of many possible configurations which are

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suitable for use with the present invention(s). Any suitable injector configuration and arrangement may be used. Hence, modifications which fall within the scope of the present invention will be apparent to those skilled in the art, in light of a review of this disclosure, and such modifications are intended to fall within the appended claims.

The invention claimed is:

1. An internal combustion engine comprising:

- a housing defining an internal cavity;
- an inner body sealingly moving within the internal cavity for defining at least one working chamber of variable volume;
- a pilot subchamber in communication with the at least one working chamber;
- an ignition element in communication with the pilot subchamber;
- a main injector communicating with the at least one working chamber; and
- a pilot injector having a tip in communication with the pilot subchamber, the tip of the pilot injector including at least one first injection hole and at least one second injection hole, the at least one first injection hole configured to form a first spray having a first spray direction, the at least one second injection hole configured to form a second spray having a second spray direction different from the first spray direction, the first spray direction extending toward a communication the pilot subchamber and the at least one working chamber, the at least one first injection hole and the at least one second injection hole being configured such that first spray includes a greater volume of fuel than the second spray.

2. The internal combustion engine as defined in claim 1, wherein the second spray direction extends away from the communication between the pilot subchamber and the at least one working chamber.

3. The internal combustion engine as defined in claim 1, wherein the second spray direction extends toward the ignition element.

4. The internal combustion engine as defined in claim 1, wherein the pilot subchamber is defined in an insert received in a wall of the housing, the pilot subchamber communicating with the at least one working chamber through an opening defined in the insert, and wherein the first spray has a central axis extending through the opening.

5. The internal combustion engine as defined in claim 4, wherein the second spray has a central axis intersecting a wall of the pilot subchamber at a location spaced apart from the opening.

6. The internal combustion engine as defined in claim 1, wherein the first spray direction extends along a central longitudinal axis of the pilot injector.

7. The internal combustion engine as defined in claim 1, wherein the at least one first injection hole has a greater cross-sectional area than that of the at least one second injection hole.

8. The internal combustion engine as defined in claim 1, wherein the internal combustion engine is a rotary engine, the inner body is a rotor having three apex portions mounted for eccentric revolutions within the internal cavity, the internal cavity having an epitrochoid shape with two lobes.

9. The internal combustion engine as defined in claim 1, wherein the at least one first injection hole and the at least one second injection hole are relatively sized such the first spray includes at least 62.5% of a pilot quantity of fuel injected by the pilot injector.



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- 10.** An internal combustion engine comprising:  
 a housing defining an internal cavity;  
 an inner body sealingly moving within the internal cavity  
 for defining at least one working chamber of variable  
 volume;  
 a pilot subchamber in communication with the at least one  
 working chamber;  
 an ignition element in communication with the pilot  
 subchamber;  
 a main injector in communication with the at least one  
 working chamber; and  
 a pilot injector having a tip including at least first and  
 second injection holes in communication with the pilot  
 subchamber, the first injection hole configured to form  
 a first spray having a first spray direction, the pilot  
 injector having a central longitudinal axis aligned with  
 a communication between the pilot subchamber and the  
 at least one working chamber, the central longitudinal  
 axis intersecting the first injection hole and the first  
 spray direction corresponding to the central longitudi-  
 nal axis, the second injection hole being spaced from  
 the central longitudinal axis.
- 11.** The internal combustion engine as defined in claim **10**,  
 wherein the second spray direction has a central axis inter-  
 secting a wall of the pilot subchamber at a location spaced  
 apart from the communication between the pilot subchamber  
 and the at least one working chamber.
- 12.** The internal combustion engine as defined in claim **11**,  
 wherein the spray direction of the second injection hole  
 extends toward the ignition element.
- 13.** The internal combustion engine as defined in claim **10**,  
 wherein the pilot subchamber is defined in an insert received  
 in a wall of the housing, the pilot subchamber communi-  
 cating with the at least one working chamber through an  
 opening defined in the insert, and wherein the central  
 longitudinal axis extends through the opening.
- 14.** The internal combustion engine as defined in claim **10**,  
 wherein the first injection hole has a greater cross-sectional  
 area than that of the second injection hole such that first  
 spray includes a greater volume of fuel than the second  
 spray.

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- 15.** The internal combustion engine as defined in claim **10**,  
 wherein the internal combustion engine is a rotary engine,  
 the inner body is a rotor having three apex portions mounted  
 for eccentric revolutions within the internal cavity, the  
 internal cavity having an epitrochoid shape with two lobes.
- 16.** A method of performing combustion in an internal  
 combustion engine, the method comprising:  
 simultaneously injecting first and second sprays of a pilot  
 quantity of fuel in a pilot subchamber with a pilot  
 injector, the first spray being directed toward a com-  
 munication between the pilot subchamber and a work-  
 ing chamber of the internal combustion engine, the  
 second spray being directed away from the first spray;  
 igniting the fuel within the pilot subchamber;  
 injecting a main quantity of fuel in the working chamber  
 with a main injector; and  
 circulating the ignited fuel from the pilot subchamber into  
 the working chamber to ignite the main quantity of fuel  
 in the working chamber.
- 17.** The method as defined in claim **16**, wherein igniting  
 the fuel is performed with an ignition element, and wherein  
 the second spray is directed toward the ignition element.
- 18.** The method as defined in claim **16**, wherein igniting  
 the fuel is performed with two spaced apart ignition ele-  
 ments, and wherein the second spray is directed between the  
 two ignition elements.
- 19.** The method as defined in claim **16**, wherein the first  
 spray includes a greater volume of fuel than the second  
 spray.
- 20.** The method as defined in claim **16**, wherein the first  
 spray is directed along a central longitudinal axis of the pilot  
 injector.
- 21.** The method as defined in claim **16**, wherein the  
 internal combustion engine is a rotary engine, the inner body  
 is a rotor having three apex portions mounted for eccentric  
 revolutions within the internal cavity, the internal cavity  
 having an epitrochoid shape with two lobes.

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